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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Park ORIGINAL DATE 1/27/07 HB 300
LAST UPDATED _____ SB _____
SHORT TITLE Increase I-40 Sound Barrier Height SB _____
ANALYST Moser

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	\$10,000.0	Non-Recurring	General fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 300 proposes to appropriate ten million dollars from the general fund to the NMDOT for the purpose of increasing the height of a noise wall located along Interstate 40 between Louisiana Boulevard and Pennsylvania Avenue in Albuquerque. The appropriation is for fiscal year 2008. Any unexpended or unencumbered funds remaining at the end of fiscal year 2008 would revert to the general fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This appropriation would reduce the general fund by ten million dollars in fiscal year 2008.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The NMDOT indicates that this bill will establish a noise mitigation precedent inconsistent with existing NMDOT policy which could result in public funds for mitigation with a high cost/benefit ratio. The department states that current Federal Highway Administration and NMDOT noise abatement policies requires a demonstrated 5 decibel reduction in noise at a cost

of \$40,000.00 or less per receptor (residence/business/park) in order to justify the expenditure of federally-designated public funds for noise mitigation. The sound barriers constructed on the south side of Interstate 40 between Louisiana Boulevard and Pennsylvania Avenue in 2005 met this criterion. These existing noise walls range in height from 18 feet at the residential locations to 12 feet in the area of the park. The foundations and structural support members were designed for the existing wall heights. If the barrier height was increased as this bill proposes the NMDOT affirms that the existing walls would need to be removed and replaced with foundations and structural support members designed for the increased height (wind loading, wall stability).

In 2005 the NMDOT evaluated raising the barriers and noted that an additional two decibel reduction could be attained by raising the walls an additional four feet (note: the human ear cannot discern less than 3 decibels). This two decibel reduction was not deemed cost effective, based on the FHWA/NMDOT noise abatement policy.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

The NMDOT indicates that it is unsure what wall height increase would be required by the bill and which wall, north side or south side, of Interstate 40 or both?

GM/mt