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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Cisneros ORIGINAL DATE 02/06/2007 HB _____
LAST UPDATED _____
SHORT TITLE Study Widening Highway 285 Through Taos SB SJM 23
ANALYST Moser

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY07	FY08	FY09	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total	\$500.00				Non- Recurring	State Road Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

NM Department of Transportation (NMDOT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 23 requests that the NMDOT conduct a widening feasibility study of US 285 from Espanola north to the Colorado border to provide an alternate truck route for traffic congestion relief through the town of Taos.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Memorial requires a study of 98 miles of U.S. Highway 285 for widening feasibility to be completed by January 2008 and presented at the second session of the forty-eighth legislature. No funding is appropriated for the feasibility study.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

NMDOT indicates that traffic congestion in Taos has been studied since 1974. A presentation on the NMDOT website lists 5 studies that addressed this issue. The most recent is the Taos Congestion Relief Study which is still underway.

SJM 23 contends that truck traffic contributes to slowdowns of traffic movement through Taos and that a significant part of the congestion in Taos is caused by through traffic. NMDOT states

that traffic data to determine the origin and destination of the truck traffic is needed as the first step in determining the feasibility of an alternate truck route. This information is needed on a region wide basis in order to determine if alternate routes will be economically feasible for commercial traffic to use on a regular basis. The Taos Congestion Relief Study was not designed to address the traffic needs and impacts of the entire region, however, the Regional Planning Organization has been discussing the need for a region-wide traffic study.

There are no major projects or studies planned for US 285 north of Espanola at this time. The NMDOT indicates a rough estimate for a corridor study of this magnitude would be a minimum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The NMDOT states that it will have to delay studies that are already underway, find budget and conduct this feasibility study under a very tight time frame.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

This study should be coordinated through the Northern Pueblos Regional Planning Organization to ensure participation of the affected local and tribal governments.

GM/nt