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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/23/2008

SPONSOR Lundstrom LAST UPDATED _____ HB 41

SHORT TITLE Study Revising Highway Speed Limits SB _____

ANALYST Moser

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$25.0	Non-recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

NM Department of Transportation (NMDOT)
Department of Public Safety (DPS)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 41 appropriates \$25 thousand dollars from the general fund to the NMDOT to study the advisability of revising highway speed limits in New Mexico and to report to interim legislative committee by October 1, 2008.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$25 thousand contained in this bill is a non-recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY09 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The NMDOT indicates that House bill 41, as currently written, is somewhat general. The study would involve a substantial amount of staff time and fiscal resources, well beyond \$25 thousand, given that the state is responsible for over 14,000 lane miles. It requires a study on the advisability of revising speeds in New Mexico, including the option for lowering speeds at night. The NMDOT suggests that it would take an approach of prioritizing its roadway system with focus first on the Interstate System, followed by U.S.

Highways, then primary and secondary systems to develop an approach and recommendations for an action plan. At a minimum, the study would involve the following:

1. Evaluating national and state data which provide criteria and rationale for the basis and justification of speed limits and varying impacts of modifying speed limits including, but not limited to, the effect of having speed differentials on various routes along with experience on routes having varying night time speeds.
2. Prioritizing New Mexico's routes by classification and documenting the existing speed limits.
3. Developing a plan with a proposal on how to pursue the implementation of options for modifying speed limits. This plan would not involve actual modification of speeds but rather outline the process for carrying out this action and identifying the fiscal and administrative resources associated with implementation for each candidate route and designated corridor.
4. Providing a comprehensive report documenting the study findings, resource needs and any associated recommendations.

ALTERNATIVES

An alternative would be to restrict the study to a pilot area such as I-40 within McKinley County and perhaps US 491. This would give a good cross-section for review and could be completed within the requested time frame.

GM/mt