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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 02/12/10

SPONSOR Barela LAST UPDATED _____ HM 61

SHORT TITLE State Railroad Museum in Belen SB _____

ANALYST Varela

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY10	FY11		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY10	FY11	FY12	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
Total		Indeterminate				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 61 requests the Department of Cultural Affairs to study the feasibility of designating the Belen Railroad Depot as the State Railroad Museum.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill contains no appropriation; however, the department may incur operational costs associated with staff time and resources in order to complete the study.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Belen railroad depot is located in the heart of downtown Belen, where it has welcomed trains transporting passengers since 1880. Belen is a thriving community that was originally founded in 1740 by Spaniards in honor of the city of Bethlehem. Belen is located along the original Camino Real, which is among New Mexico's most important cultural artifacts. Belen

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became a bustling railroad center for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad, which first arrived in Belen in 1880, generating town growth, community and industry. In 1907, the Santa Fe railroad completed the Belen cutoff from Amarillo, Texas, making it possible for many more trains to travel east and west across the United States and alleviating train travel through the steep Raton pass to the north. The creation of the cutoff resulted in Belen becoming known as "the hub city" and the location of the railroad depot is within walking distance of the site of the old Harvey house restaurant, which began serving passengers traveling through the southwest in 1901, and which now houses the only Harvey house museum in the state. The Belen railroad depot now serves as the southernmost stop of the New Mexico Railrunner express, transporting commuters and others north as far as Santa Fe and bringing commuters and visitors safely to this charming community, continuing the tradition begun with the inception of the Harvey house in 1901. Many additional trains on the southern transcontinental railroad pass through Belen each day, and the historic and current significance of the Belen railroad combines to make this railroad depot the ideal location for a state railroad museum.

PTV/mew