

**NMDOT BILL ANALYSIS
2024 REGULAR SESSION**

{Include the bill no. in the email subject line, e.g., HB2, and only attach one bill analysis and related documentation per email message}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute, or a correction of a previous bill}

Check all that apply:

Original	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	<u>1/30/2024</u>
Correction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill No.	<u>HB 231</u>

Sponsor:	<u>Cathrynn Brown</u>	Agency/ Code:	<u>NMDOT - 805 - District 2 Engineer</u>
		Person Writing Analysis:	<u>Francisco Sanchez</u>
Short Title	<u>Highway 128 Improvement</u>	Phone:	<u>575-626-8021</u>
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SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		
300,000		Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act:

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

House Bill 231 (HB 231) appropriates \$300 million from the general fund to the NMDOT for use in fiscal years (FYs) 2025-2028 for “road construction, reconstruction, improvement and maintenance, including acquisition of rights of way, planning and design” on NM Highway 128 from its intersection with NM Highway 31, in Eddy County, east to its intersection with NM Highway 18, in Lea County. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 2028 reverts to the general fund.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The NM 128 corridor is approximately 53 miles long. The estimated cost for corridor improvements is \$300 million. If funding for the entire project cannot be allocated to build the improvements for the entire corridor as a single project, a plan that implements the project in

multiple standalone projects will be put in place. HB 231 will fund the total amount of infrastructure improvements within the NM Highway 128 corridor. Implementing the project in multiple projects instead of a single project may add more costs due to contractor's fixed cost such as mobilization and other similar items for each project and inflation that could occur due to longer schedule for project completion.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HB 231 would provide NMDOT with funding to address the following issues:

1. Inability for Passing - Due to the mixture of different vehicles and types of users on this corridor, an observed speed differential results in a substantial amount of passing maneuvers. Without passing lanes, these passing maneuvers occur in opposite direction driving lanes, which results in the potential for severe conflicts, such as head-on collisions. Sight distance constraints and vehicles approaching in the opposite direction often limit the passing opportunities, which results in long queues of vehicles stacking up behind slower moving vehicles. This reduces the operational capacity of the existing 2-lane road and leads to driver frustration. As drivers become impatient, they take more risks in passing, which may lead to the potential for crashes. This factor impacts both traffic operations and safety.
2. Pavement Conditions - The existing pavement in several locations along the corridor is showing signs of distress and deterioration. Once the pavement condition falls below fair, the rate of deterioration increases rapidly and, if actions are not taken to improve the surface conditions, the pavement will begin to fail.
3. Alignment and Roadside Deficiencies - There are existing conditions along the corridor where the horizontal and vertical alignment do not meet current design criteria. Improvements at these locations will increase drivers' ability to safely navigate through the corridor. Improvements are also needed at the existing intersections and access points to enhance safety for vehicles turning in and out of the crossroad connections. Roadside barrier design standards have changed recently and, as such, all existing guardrails on the corridor will need to be replaced to meet current criteria.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation for Highway 128 will be used to (1) improve traffic operations, resulting in a more comfortable traveling experience; (2) reduce safety concerns, minimizing the potential for severe crashes; and (3) correct physical deficiencies creating better roadway conditions.

If funding for the entire project cannot be allocated to build the improvements for the entire corridor as a single project, a plan that implements the project in multiple standalone projects will be put in place. Implementing the project in multiple projects instead of a single project may add additional time and more costs due to contractor's fixed cost such as mobilization and other similar items for each project and inflation that could occur due to longer schedule for project completion.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

Not applicable.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Not applicable.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Not applicable.

ALTERNATIVES

Not applicable.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Not enacting HB 231 leaves the existing geometric configuration of the NM Highway 128 roadway unchanged from its current conditions. NM Highway 128 traffic operations, congestion, capacity, physical deficiencies, and safety conditions will remain at current levels.

Not enacting HB 231 would result in the implementation of the project in multiple projects instead of a single project and may add additional time and more costs due to contractor's fixed cost such as mobilization and other similar items for each project and inflation that could occur due to longer schedule for project completion.

AMENDMENTS

None.