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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**SPONSOR** Herndon **LAST UPDATED** \_\_\_\_\_  
**ORIGINAL DATE** 3/3/25  
**BILL** House Memorial  
**SHORT TITLE** Study Domestic Violence Service Gaps **NUMBER** 34  
**ANALYST** Chavez

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
State Agencies	Indeterminate but minimal	Indeterminate but minimal	No fiscal impact		Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.

\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to House Bill 516

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

#### Agency Analysis Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Administrative Office of the District Attorneys (AODA)

Crime Victims Reparation Committee (CVRC)

#### Agency Analysis was Solicited but Not Received From

University of New Mexico (UNM)

New Mexico Attorney General (NMAG)

#### Agency Declined to Respond

Law Offices of the Public Defender (LOPD)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of House Memorial 34

House Memorial 34 (HM34) would request the Supreme Court to convene a statewide task force to:

- Assess the current legal services available to victims of domestic violence in New Mexico,
- Identify gaps in the available services, especially for victims of domestic violence who are indigent, and
- Make recommendations for the design and implementation of cost-effective legal programs to address those gaps.

HM34 would also request that the task force be composed of a diverse group of members, including members from:

- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence,
- New Mexico Legal Aid,
- The Supreme Court’s Access to Justice Commission,
- Enlace Comunitario,
- University of New Mexico (UNM) School of Law,
- The House of Representatives,
- The Senate,
- A rural area who is a family court judge, and
- A city with a population greater than 50 thousand people who is a family court judge.

The memorial further requests that the task force submit a report detailing the task force’s findings and recommendations to the interim committee dealing with courts, corrections, and justice issues, and the governor by November 1, 2025.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Memorials do not contain an appropriation. Costs associated with HM34 will primarily be related to the staff time of the various agencies outlined as members of the statewide task force. LFC staff believe the demands of the task force could be handled by current staffing and funding levels at state agencies.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Providing a range of legal and non-legal resources is the most effective way to support victims of domestic violence. The United States Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs has found that victims who obtain permanent protection orders are 80 percent less likely to experience future abuse, and access to legal services increases the likelihood of securing such orders. Legal support at various court stages, including order enforcement, significantly impacts case outcomes. Collaboration among judicial officers, court personnel, attorneys, advocates, and community organizations is crucial in designing effective domestic violence programs for communities. Identifying gaps in systems designed to protect victims of domestic violence is essential to reducing domestic violence statewide.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) provides the following:

A gap analysis of local resources is essential to identify crucial areas where current services, policies, and interventions are lacking. The needs of victims include fundamental needs, presenting needs, or accompanying needs. Addressing gaps in local resources will sustain the frontlines for victims, assist individuals in restoring harm, improve overall well-being, and satisfy victim needs. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority states: “By addressing accompanying needs (e.g., child care, transportation), providers reduce barriers to service utilization for victims and enable victims to progress towards fulfilling other higher-level needs (i.e., love, esteem, and self-actualization)”.

Regular gap analysis can help assess the effectiveness of existing programs and identify areas for improvement, promoting accountability and continuous quality improvement. It can also draw attention to the prevalence and severity of domestic violence, raising awareness about the issue and encouraging support for prevention efforts.

Collecting statewide statistics and data about domestic violence caseloads is essential to this effort. Statistics will assist the task force in identifying hotspots and communities with higher rates of domestic violence and will also assist with an effort to recommend reallocation of resources and crafting effective policies. Data provides evidence-based information to evaluate the impact of current resources and assess where they are most needed.

The United Nations organization U.N. Women states:

Data collection from monitoring the domestic violence law is essential for informing the work and approach of the authorities when it comes to preventing and responding to violence against women. In particular, it creates better coordination by identifying and improving practices not in compliance with national legislation and international standards, as well as identifying good practices that can be shared with authorities at local and central levels. Monitoring data is used to design new policies to protect and support victims, such as social services, health-care services, social welfare, legal services and other specialized services. Systematic data collection, which is done on a regular and long-term basis, serves as a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies whether they are working towards preventing and combating domestic violence.

The Administrative Office of the District Attorneys (AODA) points out that the statewide task force should be broader and include other victim advocate groups. AODA explains that district attorney offices, who work with domestic violence victims daily, should be included in the taskforce.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

HM34 relates to House Bill 516 (HB516) because HB516 appropriates \$100 thousand from the general fund to the Supreme Court for the purpose of convening a task force to study gaps in legal services for victims of domestic violence and make recommendations for the design and implementation of cost-effective legal programs to address those gaps. HB516 would provide an appropriation to the Supreme Court to do most of what is outlined in HM34.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

The Crime Victims Reparation Committee (CVRC) provides the following:

CVRC is aware that there are shortfalls in legal services to domestic violence survivors. CVRC's funded efforts to assist domestic violence survivors would be enhanced by data from the work of the taskforce.