

**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION**  
**WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO**  
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*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)*

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

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

**Date Prepared:** 2/2/2026 *Check all that apply:*  
**Bill Number:** HB 243 Original  Correction   
 Amendment  Substitute

**Sponsor:** Joseph L Sanchez, Tara Lujan, G. Andres Romero, C. Borrego **Agency Name and Code** 46900 Racing Commission  
**Short Title:** Relating to Equines; Amending Equine Shelter Rescue Act; Est. Equine Welfare Trust Fund; Transfer from General Fund **Number:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

| Appropriation |      | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|---------------|------|---------------------------|---------------|
| FY26          | FY27 |                           |               |
| 0             | 0    | n/a                       | n/a           |
|               |      |                           |               |

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

| Estimated Revenue |      |      | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------------------|---------------|
| FY26              | FY27 | FY28 |                           |               |
| 0                 | 0    | 0    | n/a                       | n/a           |
|                   |      |      |                           |               |

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

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

|              | FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|--------------|------|------|------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Total</b> | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0                 | n/a                       | n/a           |

(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**

Synopsis: The bill expands on the purposes behind the creation of the Equine Shelter Rescue Fund. It establishes the process by which applicants can apply for and receive contracts under the fund and provides reporting requirements for the Dept. of Agriculture which will operate the monitor the Fund. Finally, it transfers the incredible sum of \$5 million dollars from the general fund to the Equine Welfare Trust Fund and \$500K to the Fund for operating expenses.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The bill takes an enormous sum of money (\$5 million) from the general fund to fund the Equine Shelter Rescue Fund at a time when the state has many, many competing requests for funding. The NMRC questions how that sum was arrived at, if any trustworthy, impartial studies were done to determine if there was in fact a need for the Equine Welfare Trust Fund and, if so, how significant is that need.

Note: major assumptions underlying fiscal impact should be documented.

Note: if additional operating budget impact is estimated, assumptions and calculations should be reported in this section.

### **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Given NM has a significant rural population and large percentages of citizens and residents alike are animal, especially horse, lovers, many individuals already choose to take in and care for horses needing rescue calling into question whether taxpayer funds should be used to subsidize such care.

Unless the Agricultural Department has the personnel to track recipients of such funds to ensure their proper use, this program is ripe for waste, fraud and abuse.

### **PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

Respectfully, does the Agricultural Department have the personnel to carefully examine applicants for such grants and conduct follow up regulation to ensure the funds are properly being expended and the horses are actually being cared for? If not, given the money involved, this Fund is potentially ripe for fraud and misuse of state funds.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

Respectfully, does the Agricultural Department have the personnel to carefully examine applicants for such grants and conduct follow up regulation to ensure the funds are properly being expended and the horses are actually being cared for? If not, given the money involved, this Fund is potentially ripe for fraud and misuse of state funds.

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

None that the NM Racing Commission is aware of at this time.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None that the NM Racing Commission is aware of at this time.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Respectfully, does the Agricultural Department have the personnel to carefully examine applicants for such grants and conduct follow up regulation to ensure the funds are properly being expended and the horses are actually being cared for? If not, given the money involved, this Fund is potentially ripe for fraud and misuse of state funds.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

Existing nonprofits which already provide such services and animal lovers who take in such horses, both without the need for taxpayer funds. Given that, is there really a need for taxpayer dollars going towards this admirable practice promoting animal welfare in this specific context?

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

Taxpayer funds can be better used for more pressing matters, and animals will be cared for via existing non-profits and caring, selfless individuals.

## **AMENDMENTS**

None. Rather, this bill should not pass the legislature.