



Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:  
Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

### **SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

#### **BILL SUMMARY**

##### Synopsis:

After reciting numerous findings and conclusions of the LFC's report, *Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes* (December 11, 2025) found at: [Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes](#), HM13 proposes that LFC convene a task force "to develop a ten-year plan and funding strategy to address and modernize systemic problems in the New Mexico criminal justice system that interfere with system performance, public safety and equal justice under the law." LFC would develop and lead a task force to make recommendations for the legislature to establish a planning and oversight strategy to elaborate and monitor implementation of the plan; create a funding strategy to support the plan; and identify critical first legislative actions responsive to key critical issues (HM13, P.4).

The task force would consist of not more than 30 members, including "justice system prevention program leaders, 911 agency leaders, law enforcement agency leadership, tribal and pueblo law enforcement, the New Mexico state police division of the department of public safety, prosecutors, diversion program leaders, public defender and defense bar leadership, juvenile probation and parole leaders, juvenile detention center leaders, magistrate and district court judges, specialty court and children's court judges, correctional officer leadership, probation officer leadership, interested citizens at large and legislators." LFC staff would support the members who are to be applicants "selected by four legislators, one from each party within the house of representatives and senate to be appointed by the speaker of the house and the president pro tempore of the senate" (HM13, p.5).

The task force will elect a chair and co-chair. LFC staff will "provide opportunities to present information and recommendations to the task force by" AOC, AODA, NMCD, DPS, CYFD, DOJ, HED, RLDNM association of counties and the municipal league. The task force will make recommendations to establish a fund to generate income to support the goals established by the task force. Those goals shall include: "establishing a planning and oversight body to integrate local planning into a state-level modernization plan for the justice system and monitor implementation for at least ten years;" establishing a process for modernizing justice system position descriptions, educational requirements and staffing adequacy; ensuring ongoing updating of curriculum and training to meet national standards and best practices; "establishing a planning function at the judicial district level to adapt and link state programs to meet local needs and link that planning system to the system established in 2025 for behavioral health services as administered by the administrative office of the courts;" identify work groups and a process to define standard data elements needed to evaluate system performance;" "establishing a process to plan for career paths for justice system professionals, with linkage to the state college system;" and "recommending legislation for the 2027 legislative session to address the most immediate needs related to these goals" (HM13, pages 6-7, items A through G).

The task force will report its findings and recommendations to the interim courts, corrections and justice committee by November 26, 2026 and by January 5, 2027 to the governor and the legislature for consideration during the next legislative session. HM13 directs a copy to be sent to LFC, the office of the governor, the attorney general, AOC, AODA, and LOPD.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

Legislative Membership – On page 5, HM13 states “that the membership not exceed thirty members and that that applicants be selected by four legislators, one from each party within the house of representatives and senate to be appointed by the speaker of the house and the president pro tempore of the senate in consultation with the legislative finance committee staff assigned to administer the task force.” The language seems to contemplate four legislative members but only provides for two. Or it may intend for the speaker and president pro tem to also be members. It may also be useful to provide a time limit for prospective applicants to apply and to whom, since applicants will precede election of the chair and co-chair by task force members. If HM13 intends for legislative members to select task force members from among the applicants, that intention should be clarified.

Judiciary Membership - HM13 is broad in its scope and ambitious in its goals. The judiciary has specific comments addressed to various findings and conclusions in [Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes](#) (hereafter “LFC Report”). Those comments will be deferred unless and until the task force convenes to consider the LFC Report. Even if no task force is created, there are recommendations in the LFC Report upon which the judiciary can act.

Among the “stakeholders within the criminal justice system” identified in HM13, pp. 4-5, are “magistrate and district court judges, specialty court and children's court judges.” It is unclear how many, if any, judges or other representatives of the courts are intended to be members of the task force. The list of prospective members mentions only trial court judges. It is very likely that recommendations by the task force would require broader judiciary support in order to be adopted as statewide initiatives implemented by the judiciary. Judiciary members necessary to the assessment of needs and effective ways to address them may include representation of the judiciary different than only trial court judges. It may be more effective to identify judiciary involvement by replacing the current language in HM13 with language such as “up to four members nominated by the New Mexico Supreme Court.”

Time Constraints – Absent an emergency clause or stated implementation date, HM13 would become effective on May 20, 2026. That allows the task force about six months until the November 26 reporting date. The next general election occurs on November 3, 2026. The election will result in a new governor and no doubt new department secretaries and other department personnel. For example, much of HM13 addresses matters that require significant input from and action by the Department of Public Safety. It is far from certain that a new governor and new DPS secretary will feel bound by any commitments to changes made by the present governor and secretary. Other executive officers and many legislators will also change depending on the election’s outcome. Engaging in the very challenging goals of HM13 during 2026 when the personnel needed to commit to those goals will very likely not be involved in implementation after January 2027 suggests it would be best to lengthen the term of the task force into 2027 or delay its process until members elected in November 2026 or appointed in early 2027 can participate.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

None noted.

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

None noted.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

None noted.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

None noted.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

None noted.

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

The judiciary will consider and act on recommendations in the LFC Report that are within the ability of the courts to address.

## **AMENDMENTS**

None noted.