

LFC Requester:	LFC
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2026 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

LFC@NMLEGIS.GOV

and

DFA@STATE.NM.US

{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}

Click all that apply:
Original **Amendment**
Correction **Substitute**

Date Prepared: 2026-01-22
Bill No: SB44

Sponsor: Brandt, Craig W
NM TECH BOARD
Short Title: MONITORING NETWORK

Agency Name and Code NMHED
Number: _____
Person Writing: Gallegos, Brittany
 brittany.
Phone: 5056706478 **Email:** gallegos@hed.nm.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
N/A	\$2,000.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue	Recurring	Fund Affected

FY26	FY27	FY28	or Nonrecurring	
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	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

Senate Bill 44 (SB44) appropriates two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMIMT) for expenditure in FY27 for seismology equipment and to expand monitoring network capabilities in the Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, in partnership with the Oil Conservation Division of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department (NMEMNRD). Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of FY27 reverts to the General Fund.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department's (NMHED's) analysis of this bill focuses on the higher education implications of the proposed legislation. Additional insight may be obtained from other agencies' analyses.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

SB44 provides an appropriation of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of NMIMT for expenditure in FY27. Any unexpended balance remaining at the end of FY27 reverts to the General Fund.

NMIMT did not submit this request to NMHED for possible incorporation into the NMHED higher education comprehensive funding recommendation. NMHED has a formal process for reviewing earmarked budget requests for higher education institutions when developing the NMHED funding recommendation.

NMHED submitted its higher education funding recommendation to the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (NMDFA) and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) on November 1, as is required by statute (9-25-9 NMSA 1978).

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

As a condition of the appropriation, NMIMT would be required to coordinate implementation with the Oil Conservation Division of the NMEMNRD.

NMIMT did not submit an FY27 Research and Public Service Project (RPSP) request to NMHED for seismology equipment, including through the regular RPSP process or through a special or supplemental request. NMHED did receive an FY27 RPSP request from NMIMT's Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources. However, the request pertained to the Aquifer Mapping and Monitoring Program to support groundwater management and did not include seismology equipment. While that request was approved, it is not aligned with the purpose of SB44.

In its Fiscal Impact Report submitted to LFC for SB44, NMIMT noted that the United States Geological Survey seismic network in the Permian Basin was deployed as a temporary network and "may not be available if federal funding for the program is reduced or eliminated." NMHED has been tracking potential federal funding reductions since May 2025, but NMIMT has not identified this as an anticipated federal funding cut, and the status of future federal support remains uncertain. As a result, potential reductions in federal funding may not provide a sufficient basis, on their own, to justify the requested appropriation.

Further, SB44 appropriates funding for seismology equipment. In its Fiscal Impact Report submitted to LFC regarding SB44, NMIMT indicates that additional funding is needed to support staffing levels required to maintain a modern, statewide seismic network. NMIMT also recommends revising the language in Section 1 to align the appropriation with current project scaling and full staffing needs, including making the funding recurring through FY29. As written, SB44 does not specify funding for staffing and instead appropriates funds for seismology equipment and monitoring network capabilities.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of SB44 would require NMIMT to coordinate with the Oil Conservation Division of NMEMNRD to support equipment acquisition and expansion of statewide monitoring network capabilities. NMIMT would incur administrative workload related to procurement, deployment, and maintenance of seismology equipment, coordination with external partners, and management of project timelines to ensure the appropriation is expended within FY27. SB44 may also increase administrative demands on NMEMNRD to support collaboration and integration of monitoring efforts with oil- and gas-related operational priorities.

SB44 does not create direct administrative implications for NMHED unless the Department is requested to support implementation, coordination, or issue resolution across agencies and institutions.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

SB44 duplicates 2026 House Bill 48 (HB48). Both bills appropriate two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the General Fund to the Board of Regents of NMIMT for expenditure in FY27 for seismology equipment and expansion of monitoring network capabilities in the Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources, in partnership with the Oil Conservation Division of NMEMNRD, with unexpended balances reverting to the General Fund.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

N/A

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

N/A

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

If SB44 is not enacted, the NMIMT Board of Regents would not receive an appropriation of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) from the General Fund for expenditure in FY27.

AMENDMENTS

N/A