

LFC Requester:	Scott Sanchez
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AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS – 2026 SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO
AgencyAnalysis.nmlegis.gov and email to billanalysis@dfa.nm.gov
(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: 26 JAN 2026 *Check all that apply:*
Bill Number: SB 102 Original Correction
 Amendment Substitute

Sponsor: Craig W. Brandt **Agency Name and Code:** 790 – Department of Public Safety
Short Title: Search and Rescue Dog Definition **Person Writing:** Lorenzo Aguirre
Title: Definition **Phone:** 505-216-8331 **Email:** lorenzo.aguirre@dps.nm.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27		
NFI	NFI	N/A	N/A
NFI	NFI	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () indicate expenditure decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	FY27	FY28		
NFI	NFI	NFI	N/A	N/A
NFI	NFI	NFI	N/A	N/A

(Parenthesis () indicates revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	NFI	NFI	NFI	NFI	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: Senate Bill 102 imposes enhanced criminal penalties for injury to or harassment of a police dog, police horse, fire dog, or search-and-rescue dog.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

No fiscal impact to DPS.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The New Mexico State Police support this legislation.

This bill provides important clarification and enhanced protections for police dogs, police horses, fire dogs, and search-and-rescue dogs, recognizing their critical role in public safety and emergency response operations. These animals routinely place themselves in dangerous situations while assisting law enforcement, fire service, and search-and-rescue personnel, and they deserve clear statutory protection when performing official duties.

Additionally, this legislation helps address the gap left by the 2019 Search and Rescue Act. The SAR law enacted in 2019 was not specific on whether animals, such as search-and-rescue dogs or horses, fell within the definition of “equipment.” That lack of specificity created uncertainty regarding their legal status and the scope of protection afforded to them. By clearly defining search-and-rescue dogs and explicitly including them in statute, this bill provides necessary clarification and consistency in the law.

It is also important to clarify that the protections afforded under this legislation for search-and-rescue dogs apply only when the dog is formally activated and operating in support of a law enforcement operation. These protections are intended to cover the animal while it is performing official, authorized duties and would not extend to circumstances in which the dog is not activated or operating outside the scope of a law enforcement operation. This distinction is critical to ensure the statute is applied as intended and avoids unintended consequences.

Elevating penalties from misdemeanors to felonies serves as a deterrent for reckless or intentional conduct that might injure or harm a police animal. Police dogs, police horses, fire dogs and search-and-rescue dogs perform specialized tasks vital to agency missions — like tracking suspects, detecting explosives or drugs, and conducting search-and-rescue. Injury to these highly trained police animals interferes with emergency response and law enforcement functions, resulting in a community-wide impact. When a police animal is injured or killed, agencies lose years of operational capability, often without a quick replacement option. Additionally, training, handler-training, care, equipment, and maintenance of police animals require significant time and financial investment. Increased penalties recognize that harming these police animals reflects the high financial and operational costs to law enforcement agencies and to the public. For these reasons, the New Mexico State Police support this bill and believes it strengthens existing law while providing clearer guidance and protections for animals engaged in official law enforcement and search-and-rescue operations.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

No performance implications to DPS.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

No administrative implications to DPS.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

No conflict, duplication, companionship or relationship to DPS.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

No technical issues to DPS.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

No other substantive issues to DPS.

ALTERNATIVES

No alternatives at this time.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Status Quo will remain

AMENDMENTS

No amendments at this time.