

LFC Requestor: Scott Sanchez

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION  
AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS

Section I: General

Chamber: Senate

Category: Bill

Number: 181

Type: Introduced

Date (of THIS analysis): 1/30/2026

Sponsor(s): Angel M. Charley, Michelle Paulene Abeyta, Cindy Nava, Charlotte Little

Short Title: Support and Training for various alerts

Reviewing Agency: Agency 665 - Department of Health

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Section II: Fiscal Impact

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation Contained		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY 26	FY 27		
DPS	\$1,000	Nonrecurring	General
DPS	300	Nonrecurring	General
IAD	250	Nonrecurring	General

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY 26	FY 27	FY 28		
\$	\$	\$		

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	<b>FY 26</b>	<b>FY 27</b>	<b>FY 28</b>	<b>3 Year Total Cost</b>	<b>Recurring or Non- recurring</b>	<b>Fund Affected</b>
<b>Total</b>	\$	\$	\$	\$		

New Mexico Indian Affairs Department is providing companion analysis, with a focus on administrative/operational costs as they are a named agency in carrying out the goals of Senate Bill 181.

**Section III: Relationship to other legislation**

*List only bill numbers: example – House Bill 45 (HB45). If there is no relationship, write “none” after each section.*

Duplicates: None

Conflicts with: None

Companion to: None

Relates to: None

Duplicates/Relates to an Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None

**Section IV: Narrative**

**1. BILL SUMMARY**

a) Synopsis

New Mexico legislation appropriates funds for fiscal year 2027 to enhance alert systems, including \$1 million to the Department of Public Safety for modernizing Turquoise, AMBER, Brittany, and Silver alerts, and \$300,000 for new staff, including a Tribal liaison analyst. An additional \$250,000 is allocated to the Indian Affairs Department for a statewide campaign to raise awareness and build trust in the Turquoise Alert system

SB 181 also aims to improve response efficacy and strengthen trust in the Turquoise Alert system.

Is this an amendment or substitution?  Yes  No

Is there an emergency clause?  Yes  No

b) Significant Issues

The New Mexico Turquoise Alert system, implemented on July 1, 2025, is an effort to address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous people (MMIP) by creating an alert specifically for missing Native people.

Native people go missing at higher rates than other groups nationwide. The problem is particularly acute in New Mexico. A 2018 report by the [Urban Indian Health Institute](#) found more cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in New Mexico than in any other state.

According to media reports, the Turquoise Alert has faced significant implementation difficulties, with state police denying the majority of requests for activation. The alert was issued only six times through mid-December despite 27 formal requests from local law enforcement resulting in 22.22% of the submitted requests being approved by law enforcement. The limited use and perceived narrow interpretation of statute have prompted calls for legislative clarification and funding for an alert coordinator. [New Turquoise Alert for missing Native people has been issued just six times • Source New Mexico.](#)

With only 22% of Turquoise alerts being approved for dissemination, that leaves a significant majority of alerts not being issued for missing AI/AN people. This lack of issuance of Turquoise Alerts impacts the ability to respond in a timely manner. Law enforcement officials and forensic experts consistently emphasize that the first 48 hours of a missing person investigation are the most critical.

On average, there are approximately 200 missing Native Americans across NM. Highest rates of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples are amongst age groups 30-39 & 40-49. [Welcome to the NMDOJ MMIP Portal for New Mexico and the Surrounding Areas](#)

The proposed legislation does not appear to address concerns expressed by legislators and law enforcement that the existing legislation (created by [2025's SB41](#)) creates excessively narrow criteria for the issuance of a Turquoise Alert. The proposal appropriates funding to the Indian Affairs Department to build community awareness of the alert and strengthen trust in the system.

## 2. PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- Does this bill impact the current delivery of NMDOH services or operations?

Yes  No

If yes, describe how.

- Is this proposal related to the NMDOH Strategic Plan?  Yes  No

## 3. FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

- If there is an appropriation, is it included in the Executive Budget Request?

Yes  No  N/A

- If there is an appropriation, is it included in the LFC Budget Request?

Yes  No  N/A

- Does this bill have a fiscal impact on NMDOH?  Yes  No

#### 4. ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Will this bill have an administrative impact on NMDOH?  Yes  No

#### 5. DUPLICATION, CONFLICT, COMPANIONSHIP OR RELATIONSHIP

None

#### 6. TECHNICAL ISSUES

Are there technical issues with the bill?  Yes  No

#### 7. LEGAL/REGULATORY ISSUES (OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES)

- Will administrative rules need to be updated or new rules written?  Yes  No
- Have there been changes in federal/state/local laws and regulations that make this legislation necessary (or unnecessary)?  Yes  No
- Does this bill conflict with federal grant requirements or associated regulations?  
 Yes  No
- Are there any legal problems or conflicts with existing laws, regulations, policies, or programs?  Yes  No

*None*

#### 8. DISPARITIES ISSUES

Indigenous people go missing nationwide at disproportionate levels. According to 2023 Congressional research, in June of that year, 3.5% of the missing persons included in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System were identified as American Indian/Alaska Native, while they form 1.1% of the U.S. population overall ([Missing and Murdered Indigenous People \(MMIP\): Overview of Recent Research, Legislation, and Selected Issues for Congress | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)).

New Mexico is no exception. According to 2024 U.S. Census data, 11.4% of New Mexicans identify as American Indian or Alaska Native alone or in combination. Currently on the state Department of Public Safety's list of missing persons, there are 936 names ([New Mexico Missing Person Information](#)), while the state Department of Justice dashboard shows there are 198 missing Indigenous persons ([Welcome to the NMDOJ MMIP Portal for New Mexico and the Surrounding Areas](#)). This would indicate that 21% of the missing persons in New Mexico are Indigenous, showing that disappearance is an issue that disproportionately affects Indigenous people in this state.

The system relies on collaboration between Tribal, state, and local agencies, which can create delays. The system was never mandated for Tribal police, and there is a need for better education on how to file reports to meet the strict criteria.

#### 9. HEALTH IMPACT(S)

If this bill succeeds in increasing the number of Turquoise Alerts issued when Indigenous people go missing, it could increase the number of missing people found and reunited with their loved ones and communities.

**10. ALTERNATIVES**

None

**11. WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL?**

If SB181 is not enacted, the alerts system will continue operating as it does currently.

**12. AMENDMENTS**

None