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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 50

SHORT TITLE: Social Work Licensure Interstate Compact

SPONSOR: Herndon/Sedillo Lopez/Silva

LAST ORIGINAL
UPDATE: _____ **DATE:** 1/20/2026 **ANALYST:** Malone

REVENUE*
(dollars in thousands)

| Type | FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | FY29 | FY30 | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|----------------|------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|---|
| Licensure fees | N/A | Indeterminate | Indeterminate | Indeterminate | Indeterminate | Recurring | Other State Funds (Board of Social Work Examiners Fund) |

Parentheses indicate revenue decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT*
(dollars in thousands)

| Agency/Program | FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|----------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| RLD | See "Fiscal Implications" | \$70.0 | \$0.0 | \$70.0 | Nonrecurring | Other state funds |
| RLD | See "Fiscal Implications" | \$8.0+ | \$68.0+ | \$76.0+ | Recurring | Other state funds |
| Total | | \$78.0+ | \$68.0+ | \$146.0+ | | Other state funds |

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to House Bills 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 31, 32, 33, 44, and 45.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis
Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)
Workforce Solutions Department (WSD)
Health Care Authority (HCA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 50

House Bill 50 (HB50) enters New Mexico into the Social Work Licensure Interstate Compact (SW

compact or compact) and amends the Social Work Practice Act (Act), Section 61-31-8 NMSA 1978, to require criminal history background checks for all applicants for licensure to comply with the requirements of the SW compact. The compact is intended to make it easier for a social worker to practice across state lines with other participating compact member states. The compact preserves the regulatory authority of each state to the extent not inconsistent with the compact; allows the exchange of licensure and disciplinary information between states; and facilitates telehealth to improve access to services.

Participating states must require graduation from an accredited institution; a period of supervised practice; passage of a qualifying national exam; and have the ability to receive, investigate, and adjudicate license complaints. States shall designate the categories of social work licensure eligible for a multistate license in that state, and each category of licensure must conform with certain requirements of the compact. Each state must send one delegate to serve on the compact's commission. The commission will develop and maintain a coordinated database and reporting system to which states submit a uniform data set of licensee information. The compact grants power to the home state to investigate violations by licensees from other member states.

The bill also amends Section 61-31-6 NMSA 1978 to add knowledge of New Mexico cultures within the scope of social work practice in New Mexico and revise language to be gender neutral.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns, which is May 20, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Revenue implications from joining the compact are unclear. The compact will require member states to implement a compact fee paid to the Commission but also allows member states to charge a licensing fee for the practice privilege. Revenue from additional licenses issued will be dependent on price and number issued.

The Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) anticipates one-time costs to integrate the NM Plus licensing system with the compact's system through an application programming interface (API) which will be approximately \$70 thousand. The API process will require ongoing use of specialized software which RLD estimates at \$60 thousand. Both costs could be greater if RLD requires more APIs than used in its forecast (2 APIs).

The board "may" but more likely will be required to pay an annual assessment based on a formula determined by the commission. If the substitute is enacted, the Board will incur travel expenses for a delegate to attend annual commission meetings. If the Board is responsible for these costs, the potential expenses are estimated at \$2,000 per day for one delegate each year, with an estimated four days of travel and attendance each year. Therefore, RLD anticipates a recurring expense of \$8,000 per year in FY26 and future fiscal years. With respect to adjudicating license complaints, states may incur expenses related to taking any adverse actions.

An administrative rulemaking process, including a public hearing and publication of notices and such, would be required. RLD noted the Social Work Board should be able to absorb the costs.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

To date, thirty-one (31) states have adopted the SW Compact, including every state bordering New Mexico, except Texas. The SW Compact is not yet operational in any state, but issuance of multistate licenses is expected to become available once the compact's administrative infrastructure is implemented, which may take place in calendar year 2026 but possibly later.

The board is in support of SB105. The board cites concerns about unmet mental health diagnoses, treatment and substance use/misuse disorders, limited mobility and licensure for social workers, reduced availability of telehealth options, and ongoing social work shortages.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

RLD also explained that the board would be required to adopt rules in accordance with requirements to participate in the compact. In addition, staff would need to develop procedures for using the database, which is the licensure information system maintained by the commission. Background checks would also need to be implemented. RLD says those contracts already exists.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

This bill relates to other bills enacting other model interstate licensing compacts, including:

- House Bill 10 Physician Assistant Interstate Compact
- House Bill 11 Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Compact,
- House Bill 12 Physical Therapy Licensure Compact
- House Bill 13 Occupational Therapy Compact,
- House Bill 14 Dentist & Dental Hygienist Compact
- House Bill 31 EMS Personnel Licensure Interstate Compact
- House Bill 32 Counseling Licensure Compact
- House Bill 33 Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact
- House Bill 44 Dental & Dental Hygienist Compact
- House Bill 45 Physician Assistant Licensure Compact