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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 53

SHORT TITLE: NM Ireland Trade Commission

SPONSOR: Murphy

LAST UPDATE: _____ **ORIGINAL DATE:** 1/21/2026 **ANALYST:** Francis

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY26	FY27	FY28	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
EDD		\$146.7	\$146.7	\$293.3	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis

Economic Development Department

Tourism Department

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 53

House Bill 53 (HB53) establishes the New Mexico-Ireland Trade Commission to enhance bilateral trade, investment, and economic collaboration between New Mexico and Ireland, focusing on technology, agriculture, energy, policy coordination, business and academic exchanges, and infrastructure investment. The commission would consist of 17 members with knowledge or experience of Irish affairs and trade relations between New Mexico and Ireland and the director of the Division of International Trade at the Economic Development Department (EDD). Terms are for four years except nine of the first appointments would be for two years. The division will provide staff for the commission. The commission will submit an annual report beginning December 1, 2027, to the governor and Legislature.

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

HB53 requires the Division of International Trade of the Economic Development Department (EDD) to provide staff to the commission as required to fulfill its mission. HB53 does not provide an appropriation to EDD, and EDD reports it will need at least one additional position.

Per the 2026 budget request for EDD, an additional position would require additional budget of \$146.7 thousand. See “Administrative Implications” for more on current staffing at EDD that work in international trade.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Members to the commission would be required to be appointed no later than after effective date. The members of the commission would be:

1. Director of Division of International Trade or designee,
2. Five Senate appointments (three by the president pro-tem and two by the minority leader),
3. Five House appointments (three by the speaker and two by the minority leader)
4. Four gubernatorial appointments from higher education, a tribe or pueblo, agriculture, and oil and gas.
5. Two gubernatorial appointments from different political parties and who represent Irish-American communities or interests in New Mexico.

As noted by EDD, the agency collaborated on an analysis of New Mexico’s competitiveness in attracting foreign direct investment. The report found that Germany and Canada were the top markets for investment attraction opportunities in energy and natural resources, emerging technologies, and value-added agriculture sectors overall, with Taiwan and Mexico coming in second for the emerging technologies and value-added agriculture sectors, respectively. Ireland did not appear in the top 10 markets for foreign direct investment opportunities.

Additionally, EDD reports that, over the past three years, Ireland’s share of total trade with New Mexico has remained below 1 percent, except for imports in 2024. In 2024, there was a hike in imports of electrical machinery, which the agency says is likely an isolated case and tied to Intel’s efforts to get ahead of changes in tariffs. EDD argues there is little evidence to direct limited resources toward Ireland, especially given that EDD’s focus is on exports and not on imports.

The Tourism Department has a travel trade program to promote New Mexico businesses to international tour operators and travel agencies, which includes a focus on the United Kingdom/Ireland market.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HB53 identifies the one nonappointed commission member as the director of the Division of International Trade of the Economic Development Department or the director’s designee. EDD’s International Trade Division was defunded in 2010 and no longer exists within EDD’s organization, except by statute. EDD maintained 1 FTE in the Office of International Trade within the Economic Development Division until 2020. The Economic Development Division works directly with the cabinet secretary and the governor’s office to attract foreign direct investment to the state. To meet the intent of HB53 and serve the commission to the best of its ability, EDD would require at least 1 additional FTE with experience and expertise in international trade.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

One of the commission members is to be the Director of the Division of International Trade within EDD or the Director's designee. However, EDD reports that the Division of International Trade was defunded in 2010 and no longer exists in the organization, except by statute.

EDD notes:

NMSA 1978 Section 9-15-4(E) summarizes EDD's divisions and refers to "the trade and Mexican affairs division" while NMSA 1978 Section 9-15-30 creates the "Mexican affairs division" and 9-15-30.1 creates the "division of international trade," which is referenced in HB53. EDD recommends consolidating these divisions to create one Division of International Trade.

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