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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

**BILL NUMBER:** House Bill 96/aHAFC/aHfl#1/aSRC

**SHORT TITLE:** Space Commission Working Group

**SPONSOR:** Hochman-Vigil/Dow/Hernandez, J

**LAST ORIGINAL**  
**UPDATE:** 2/18/2026      **DATE:** 1/21/2026      **ANALYST:** Francis

### APPROPRIATION\* (dollars in thousands)

FY26	FY27	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	No fiscal impact		

Parentheses indicate revenue decreases.

\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to the General Appropriation Act as amended by the Senate

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

#### Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis

Spaceport Authority

Economic Development Department

Office of the Lieutenant Governor

#### Agency or Agencies That Were Asked for Analysis but did not Respond

New Mexico Governor's Office

Department of Finance and Administration

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of Senate Rules Committee Amendment

The Senate Rules Committee (SRC) amended House Bill 96 by adding an additional member to be appointed by the Senate President pro tempore. The Space Commission working group will be made up of six members appointed one each by the governor, the lieutenant governor, the president pro-tem of the Senate, the speaker of the House, the senate minority leader and the house minority leader.

### Synopsis of House Floor Amendment

The House Floor amendment to House Bill 96 (HB96) modifies the composition of the Space Commission Working Group and establishes an expiration date. The two members appointed by agreement of the governor, lieutenant governor, and House speaker are now appointed one each by the House minority leader and the Senate minority leader. The working group will dissolve

on December 31, 2026.

## Synopsis of HAFC Amendment to House Bill 96

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee amendment to House Bill 96 removes the appropriation, which is now part of General Appropriation Act as amended by the Senate.

## Synopsis of House Bill 96

House Bill 96 (HB96) appropriates \$200 thousand from the general fund to Economic Development Department (EDD) for the purpose of setting up the space commission working group made up of five members. The governor, lieutenant governor, and House Speaker appoint one member each, and the remaining two are appointed by agreement of at least two of the governor, lieutenant governor, and House Speaker. Priority in assessing candidates will be for those with experience in the space and aviation industry. Members serve for undefined terms at the pleasure of the appointment officer. EDD will provide administrative backing, including one staff member to support the working group.

The working group will prepare and present a report on the establishment of a Space Commission by October 1, 2026.

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

The appropriation of \$200 thousand contained in the original bill was removed by HAFC.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

***Overlap with the Technology and Innovation Network Advisory Board.*** Laws 2025, Chapter 133 (House Bill 20) created the Technology and Innovation Division (TIO) and the technology and innovation network advisory board. The working group and the goals outlined in HB96 may be duplicative to the duties of the existing network advisory board. Of note, Chapter 133 already identifies aerospace and space as one of the target sectors.

The advisory board established in Laws 2025, Chapter 133 is responsible for providing guidance and recommendations on the strategic planning and engagement of TIO. The board includes two representatives with expertise in aerospace and space. Additionally, the advisory board consists of subcommittees that develop sector-specific metrics and goals, which could include aerospace and space. The existing technology and innovation advisory board could create a space and aerospace subcommittee to identify key stakeholders and develop a strategic plan, negating the need for an additional working group as prescribed in HB96.

Chapter 133 tasks the TIO with supporting the ecosystems of the target sectors, providing program staff to serve as liaisons to target sector ecosystems, developing a statewide technology and innovation strategic plan. These duties are similar to the duties outlined in HB96 for the working group. In FY26, the TIO had an operating budget of \$6.3 million and a staff of 9 FTE.

**Similar Commissions in Other States.** The New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA) reports that such a commission that organizes statewide initiatives to promote growth in the industry would be beneficial to the authority and recommends the working group also conduct a review of other states that have similar commissions, particularly Texas, Colorado, Florida, and Arizona.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE**

The Office of the Lieutenant Governor (LGO) notes that while the NMSA focuses on Spaceport America, a permanent commission could focus on broader statewide policy in this area.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

EDD is concerned required support for the working group may be a burden on existing staff and hiring an FTE for such a short time would be difficult. If passed, the bill would go into effect May 2026, giving the agency less than six months to hire an FTE, get members appointed, and publish a report. EDD recommends hiring a contractor to support the working group would be more practical. However, the technology and innovation network advisory board already receives staff support from TIO.

## **CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP**

Relates to the General Appropriation Act as amended by the Senate, which appropriates \$200.0 thousand to EDD to support the Space Commission Working Group.

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