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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 203

SHORT TITLE: Spaceport Authority Board Members

SPONSOR: Dow/Armstrong

LAST ORIGINAL
UPDATE: _____ **DATE:** 2/3/2026 **ANALYST:** Francis

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

| Agency/Program | FY26 | FY27 | FY28 | 3 Year Total Cost | Recurring or Nonrecurring | Fund Affected |
|----------------|------|------------------|------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | | No fiscal impact | | | | |

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to House Bill 96

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency or Agencies Providing Analysis
New Mexico Spaceport Authority

Agency or Agencies That Were Asked for Analysis but did not Respond
Economic Development Department

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 203

House Bill 203 (HB203) amends the Spaceport Authority membership, changing the makeup of the authority and adding additional criteria for membership. Currently, the authority is made up of seven voting members, six appointed by the governor with staggered initial terms and confirmed by the Senate and the secretary of Economic Development Department (EDD). The authority also includes the lieutenant governor and the executive director of the authority, both as non-voting members.

HB 203 would change the make up of the six appointed members, requiring 2 to be appointed by the governor (with consent of Senate) and one each to be appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, the minority floor leader of the Senate, the speaker of the House, and the minority floor leader of the House.

HB203 requires that the members appointed by the governor have experience in any of the following: aerospace or aviation, bond financing, public finance or capital project funding, legal or academic experience in aerospace, aviation, public infrastructure, regulatory compliance, public-private partnerships, or a relevant science.

Any vacancies will be filled by the officer making the original appointment.

To facilitate the transition to the new membership, HB 203 requires that members continue to serve their terms, which are staggered, and then the two seats with four-year terms will be appointed by the House speaker and minority floor leader. The two seats with three-year terms will be appointed one each by the Senate president pro tempore and the Governor. And the final two serving two-year initial terms will be appointed by the Senate minority leader and the Governor.

The effective date of this bill is July 1, 2026.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

HB203 would have no fiscal impact and has no appropriation.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This change in membership will give the Legislature more input on the authority. Currently, the governor appoints all six members, three from each party, with consent from the Senate. With HB203, the House would have a role, and the Senate role would expand. The House, for example, would be in a position to nominate the next two vacancies.

According to NM Spaceport Authority (NMSA) via email to Legislative Finance Committee staff:

First, all seats on the Board have matured into full four-year terms but, according to the statute’s design, the terms are still staggered. Even though they all have four-year terms, only two come up for confirmation every year. By the end of FY26, all the terms will have expired (see the table below pertaining to the present terms of the six Governor-appointed voting members). So, if the bill passes, all seats will be appointed initial terms.

NMSA (via email) provided the following table:

Present Board Terms:

| SEAT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Start | 8/21/2024 | 6/18/2023 | 6/18/2021 | 2/23/2022 | 8/14/2022 | 11/7/2023 |
| End | 3/22/2025 | 3/22/2025 | 6/17/2025 | 6/17/2025 | 6/17/2026 | 6/17/2026 |
| Approx. Term Duration | 7 months | 1.5 years | 4 years | 3 years, 4 months | 3 years, 10 months | 2 years, 7 months |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Holdover Status | Holdover | Holdover | Holdover | Holdover | Unexpired | Unexpired |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|

NMSA reports HB 203 adds specific experience criteria to the appointed board members which “would be beneficial to the Spaceport Authority Board,” but the criteria may also exclude some with other useful public policy experience.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

NMSA is concerned that adding additional nominators “could temporarily complicate or otherwise slow the process of designating new members.”

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

House Bill 96 creates a working group to provide recommendations for a permanent “space commission” that would have overlap with the Spaceport Authority.

NF/dw/ct