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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Ryan ORIGINAL DATE 02/06/14
LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____
SHORT TITLE Two-Thirds to Amend Constitution SJR 17
ANALYST Armstrong

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY14	FY15	FY16	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		>\$ 46.0		>\$ 46.0	Nonrecurring	Election Fund

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Attorney General's Office (AGO)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 17 proposes to amend the New Mexico Constitution to require that two-thirds of both the Senate and the House of Representatives must vote in favor of proposed constitutional amendments before they are placed on an election ballot.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 1-16-13 NMSA 1978 and the NM constitution, SOS is required to print samples of the text of each constitutional amendment, in both Spanish and English, in an amount equal to ten percent of the registered voters in the state. The SOS is also required to publish them once a week for four weeks preceding the election in newspapers in every county in the state. In 2012, the cost for the 2012 General Election ballots was \$46 thousand per constitutional amendment. However, if the ballot size is greater than one page, front and back, it would increase the cost of conducting the general election. In addition to the cost of the ballot, there will be added time for processing voters to vote and would mean additional ballot printing systems would be required to avoid having lines at voting convenience centers.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Currently, a simple majority is required in each house of the Legislature to place a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot. Increasing the number of votes needed to place a proposed constitutional amendment on an election ballot would likely result in fewer such proposed constitutional amendments being submitted to voters.

JA/ds