



New Mexico Municipal League Legislative Priorities – 2024 Legislative Session



Support for Statewide Emergency Medical Services

The Municipal League supports additional, much-needed funding for the state's chronically underfunded emergency medical services (EMS). The state's EMS fund currently receives approximately \$2.8 million annually. High-quality EMS service is critical for communities across the state, providing lifesaving interventions, transportation to healthcare facilities, and support for disaster response, as well as for the state's growing outdoor recreation industry. However, EMS services, especially in rural areas, face significant financial challenges, with capital costs high and rising.

The League supports directing 10 percent of health insurance premium tax revenue to the EMS Fund for local EMS services to cover costs of supplies, equipment, vehicles, and other operational needs.



Funding for Water Infrastructure Projects through the Water Project Fund

The Municipal League supports fully funding Water Project Fund projects that have been vetted and meet Water Trust Board requirements. The New Mexico Finance Authority estimates \$133 million in available funding for water projects in 2024 and received approximately \$275 million in project applications.

The Water Project Fund is a key funding source for local governments to implement critical water-related projects, including flood prevention, water conservation and treatment, and watershed restoration and management. The League supports leveraging record state revenues to invest in communities' critical infrastructure and natural resources.



Expansion of Workers' Compensation Coverage for First Responders

The Municipal League supports expanding workers' compensation for first responders, recognizing the risks that law enforcement, firefighters, and others take to serve and protect their communities. The League supports including breast, lung, and prostate cancers as presumptive occupational diseases for firefighters, entitling them to workers' compensation benefits if they are diagnosed with these conditions. The League also supports establishing hearing loss as a presumptive occupational condition for law enforcement officers.

The League believes that first responders deserve adequate coverage when diagnosed with conditions linked to their service.



Investment in State and Local Road Infrastructure

The Municipal League supports directing all Motor Vehicle Excise Tax to road funds, with 60 percent to the State Road Fund and 40 percent to the Transportation Project Fund for local roads. Directing 100 percent of MVEX revenues to road funds would generate an additional ~\$140 million for road infrastructure, using a growing revenue source, and would help to address the \$5 billion+ in needed but unfunded transportation projects across the state. More road funding would also alleviate the financial impacts on New Mexicans from poor quality roads (vehicle operating costs, safety costs, and congestion costs).

Currently, ~60 percent of excise tax revenues go to the General Fund, ~22 percent go to the State Road Fund, and ~18 percent go to the Transportation Project Fund.



Coverage of Public Safety Radio Network Fees for Local Public Safety Agencies

The Municipal League supports ongoing funding to cover public safety agencies' fees for the state's Public Safety Radio Communications network. Reliable, interoperable communications are critical for public safety across New Mexico, and providing a sustained funding source for subscription fees will encourage adoption of the statewide network. Currently, public safety agencies must pay monthly service fees of \$20 to \$30 per radio to the Department of Information Technology, which can be prohibitive, especially for smaller agencies.

The Municipal League supports an appropriation to DoIT to cover fees for municipal, county, and tribal public safety agencies that provide law enforcement, fire, medical, or other emergency services.



Elimination of Improper Tax Administration Fee on Local Governments

The League supports eliminating an improper "fee" on local governments charged by the Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD). Regulatory fees must be structured to cover only "reasonably necessary" costs of service; however, the current fee structure is not based on any actual assessed costs. Further, the fee generated over \$50 million for the state's general fund in FY22, while TRD's entire general fund budget was \$65.3 million, meaning that fee revenue represents nearly 80 percent of the agency's general fund budget. It is extremely unlikely that administration of local government taxes accounts for nearly 80 percent of TRD's general fund expenditures.

For more information:

AJ Forte, Executive Director / 505-699-6944 / ajforte@nmml.org
Alison Nichols, Director of Policy / 505-470-3931 / anichols@nmml.org
Tim Johnson, Public Safety Director / 505-946-7207 / tjohnson@nmsif.org

www.nmml.org