

<b>LFC Requester:</b>	
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2025 REGULAR SESSION**

**WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO**

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*(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)*

**SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

*{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}*

**Date Prepared:** 2/12/2025 *Check all that apply:*  
**Bill Number:** S50-341 Original  Correction   
 Amendment  Substitute

<b>Sponsor:</b> <u>Sen. Maestas</u>	<b>Agency Name and Code</b>
<b>Short Title:</b> <u>PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS</u>	<b>Number:</b> <u>DFA-341</u>
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**SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT**

**APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)**

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26		
	\$200.0	Non-recurring	General Fund
	\$400.0	Non-recurring	General Fund
	\$400.0	Non-recurring	General Fund
	\$1,000.0		

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate expenditure decreases)

**REVENUE (dollars in thousands)**

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY25	FY26	FY27		

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

**ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)**

	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected

<b>Total</b>						
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(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to:  
 Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act

**SECTION III: NARRATIVE**

**BILL SUMMARY**

Synopsis: Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) amends the Law Enforcement Training Act and the Law Enforcement Retention Fund to include telecommunicators in retention programs, funding allocations, and certification processes. It updates the responsibilities of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Standards and Training Council, modifies definitions, and consolidates training provisions. The bill provides funding for training and retention of telecommunicators within public safety agencies. Additionally, it enacts SECTION 10, requiring national accreditation of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy by January 1, 2029, and the integration of accreditation standards into certified satellite academies. The bill also repeals SECTION 12, which eliminates Sections 29-7-4.1, 29-7-4.2, 29-7-5, 29-7-7.3 through 29-7-7.5, 29-7-7.7, 29-20-3, and 31-18B-5 NMSA 1978, as well as related amendments from Laws 2002, 2011, 1969, 2007, 2010, 2017, and 2003.

Furthermore, the bill revises SECTION 2 and SECTION 5 to expand the authority of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Standards and Training Council, which will now oversee all police officer and public safety telecommunicator standards, training, and educational requirements. It establishes new training program review cycles, ensuring that required continuing education programs are reviewed every two years, and the annual legal update is reviewed annually. The council will also be responsible for setting standards and certification requirements for regional satellite training academies in alignment with accreditation standards.

The bill expands the powers and duties of the board, granting the authority to:

- Deny admission to a certification program or suspend or revoke a police officer’s or telecommunicator’s certification with evidence demonstrating probable cause that continued performance represents a threat to public safety, including the potential for imminent harm to others or agency liability.
- Conduct investigations, administer oaths, and subpoena persons as necessary to determine the fitness of police officers or public safety telecommunicators.
- Appoint a chief executive officer, who will employ professional and support staff independently from the Department of Public Safety, with the CEO maintaining independent budget authority.

The bill also revises SECTION 6, which defines the curriculum for police officer training, shifting the determination of course content to the council based on updated job task analyses conducted every five years. The curriculum must include:

- A comprehensive set of topics based on evidence- and science-based national best practices.
- Core skills and knowledge required for proficiency.
- Integrated application of knowledge in high-risk and high-liability situations.

- Use of force training that follows evidence-based best practices.
- Attention to police officer wellness and challenges in police practice that vary by locality.

The academy is required to design and implement new training programs under the oversight and approval of the council, including:

- Basic and advanced training programs for police officers and telecommunicators.
- Certification by waiver for experienced police officers from other states or federal agencies.
- Field training officer certification by July 1, 2027.
- Executive certification training by July 1, 2028.
- Advanced public safety telecommunicator training by July 1, 2028.
- Specialty and advanced faculty credentialing by July 1, 2027.

Additionally, all curricula must be publicly available on the academy's website and shall not be published in the New Mexico Administrative Code. The regional satellite law enforcement academies must ensure that their training programs demonstrate equivalency to the standards required by the state academy.

Summary of Appropriations:

SB 50 includes one-time appropriations totaling one million dollars (\$1M) that do not revert to the general fund. The breakdown of the appropriations is as follows:

- \$200,000 – Allocated to the Department of Public Safety for job task analysis, assessment, and recommendations to modernize public safety telecommunicator (PST) training, ensuring alignment with new technologies and crisis intervention needs.
- \$400,000 – Allocated to the Department of Public Safety for contractor curriculum development and testing to implement PST training, ensuring consistency and effectiveness across agencies.
- \$400,000 – Allocated to the Department of Public Safety for the development of new in-service training programs for all police officers to enhance professional development and operational readiness.

Since these funds will not revert, it is critical to ensure they are allocated efficiently to maximize long-term benefits for public safety training and workforce development.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Expanding the Law Enforcement Retention Fund to include Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs) will require additional funding for training, recruitment, and retention efforts.

Key fiscal impacts include:

- **Cost Savings from Retention:** Reducing turnover lowers recruitment and training expenses over time.
- **Administrative Overhead:** Managing retention may require additional oversight at DPS.
- **Training Investments:** While PSTs will have access to more training opportunities, funding for program development and curriculum.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

One area of concern is the proposed replacement of one of the two New Mexico state-certified public safety telecommunicator positions on the council. The current language removes the requirement that one representative be from an agency that offers fire and medical telecommunications services or a rural public safety agency and replaces it with a director of emergency management from different regions of the state.

This change raises concerns because:

- **PST Representation:** There are 1,037 PSTs in the state, but only a handful of emergency management directors who are a certified PST. This replacement drastically reduces and restricts the amount of eligible PST representation on a council.
- **Lack of Direct PST Input:** PSTs are the primary workforce affected by training decisions and should have a direct voice in shaping training standards rather than being represented by a role that may have limited firsthand experience in 911 operations.
- **Potential Conflict with Workforce Retention Goals:** Removing a PST-focused seat could hinder retention and professional development efforts by limiting their influence over key decisions.

**Imbalance of Law Enforcement Representation:** While efforts to streamline the council are understandable, it is essential to maintain a fair and effective balance in representation. Under the proposed changes, law enforcement representation would fall below 50% on a council responsible for overseeing their training and standards. To ensure informed decision-making and policy alignment, law enforcement representatives should continue to make up at least half of the council's membership.

## PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- Agencies must adjust hiring, training, and reporting structures to comply with the new retention fund provisions and expanded curriculum requirements.
- The requirement for accreditation by January 1, 2029, will necessitate increased oversight and standardization across all training programs.
- The bill significantly expands the powers of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Standards and Training Council, shifting training oversight and program determination to the council.
- Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs) are now explicitly included in training and certification requirements, ensuring they receive standardized education and support.
- The creation of new training programs, including executive and specialty credentialing, establishes a structured pathway for advanced law enforcement education.

### **Benefits of Including Public Safety Telecommunicators (PSTs) in the Retention Fund:**

- **Career Path Development:** Supports structured career growth and stability for PSTs.
- **Reclassification Alignment:** Enhances recognition of PSTs as essential first responders.
- **Retention and Workforce Stability:** Financial incentives help reduce turnover and retain skilled PSTs.
- **Support for Training and Advancement:** Ensures PSTs have equal access to development opportunities.
- **Consistency Across Roles:** Aligns PST retention strategies with law enforcement,

strengthening collaboration.

Additional concerns from stakeholders include:

- **Adding a Director and Staff to the Council:** While the intention behind adding a director and staff may be to provide administrative support, there are concerns that it could lead to unintended challenges. A similar structure within the Certification Board has resulted in internal conflicts that have sometimes detracted from its core mission. It is important to ensure that any structural changes to the council enhance efficiency and collaboration rather than creating additional layers of complexity.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

- The New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy must restructure training programs to comply with new standards and integrate required curriculum updates.
- Regional satellite academies must align with state-mandated training equivalency requirements and maintain updated training records.
- The newly independent chief executive officer must oversee staffing, budgeting, and training program administration.

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

- Aligns with SB 137, which if enacted, increases the 911 surcharge, which can fund local PST training costs, though it does not provide funding for program development.
- Aligns with SB 173, which seeks to include PSTs under the same PERA coverage as first responders, further recognizing their essential role in public safety and workforce retention efforts.

## **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

- Consider a transition plan that provides guidance for a safety agency to transition from current training programs and to comply with newly mandated accreditation standards by 2029.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

## **ALTERNATIVES**

## **WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL**

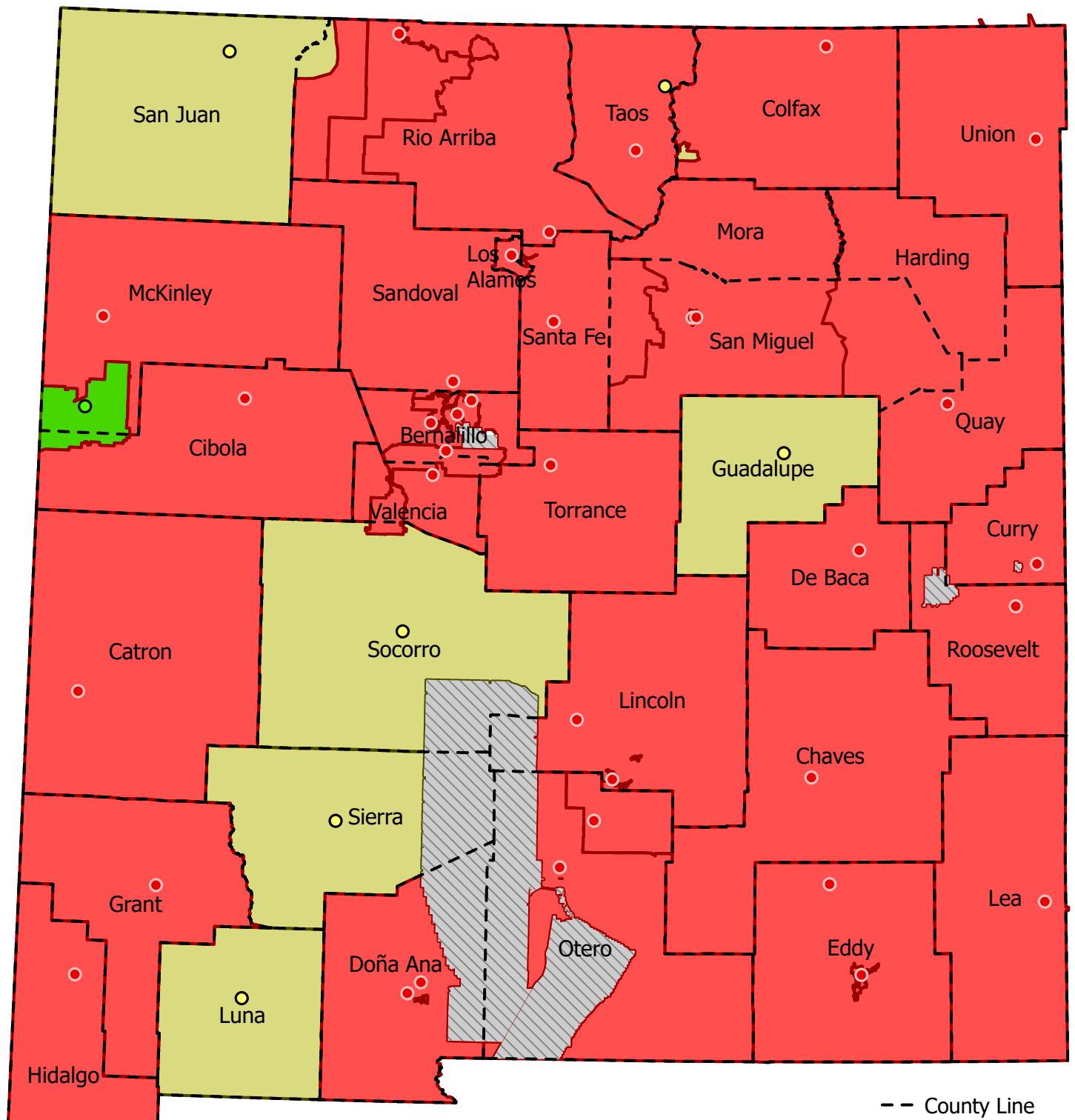
Failure to enact SB 50 could have significant implications, including:

- **Loss of Structured Career Advancement for PSTs:** Without inclusion in the retention fund and expanded training programs, PSTs may face limited professional development opportunities, affecting workforce stability.
- **Increased Turnover in PST Workforce:** Without financial incentives and structured retention efforts, high turnover rates among PSTs may persist, leading to staffing shortages and operational challenges in emergency communications.
- **Inconsistencies in Training Standards:** Without the proposed updates, training

programs for PSTs and law enforcement officers may lack standardization and fail to incorporate modern best practices.

- **Missed Opportunity for Accreditation:** The failure to move forward with national accreditation for the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy could impact the quality and recognition of training programs.

## **AMENDMENTS**



### FY24 Staffing Rates

#### 911 Center Service Areas

- Fully staffed for 12 months
- \*Fully staffed for <12 months
- \*Never fully staffed
- Military Area

#### 911 Center Locations

- Fully staffed for 12 months
- \*Fully staffed for <12 months
- \*Never fully staffed

\*911 Directors attribute difficulty in retaining staff to low wages