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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Pettigrew/Chavez, N/Reeb LAST UPDATED _____
ORIGINAL DATE 2/12/25
BILL
SHORT TITLE Additional Crimes for Reparations NUMBER House Bill 231
ANALYST Sanchez

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
CVRC	No fiscal impact	Indeterminate but minimal	Indeterminate but minimal	Indeterminate but minimal	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)
Administrative Office of the District Attorneys (AODA)
Law Offices of the Public Defender (LOPD)
Office of the Attorney General (NMAG)
Department of Health (DOH)
Crime Victims Reparation Commission (CVRC)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 231

House Bill 231 (HB231) proposes amendments to Section 31-22-8 NMSA 1978 (Crime Victims Reparation Act) by expanding the list of enumerated offenses for which victims may receive reparations. Specifically, the bill adds assault, battery, criminal sexual contact, and armed robbery to the list of crimes that qualify for victim compensation. The amendments in HB231 include these offenses alongside existing eligible crimes such as arson resulting in bodily injury, murder, kidnapping, and human trafficking. The bill maintains the provision that awards are not available for loss or damage to property.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

None of the agencies responding to the request for analysis indicated this bill would have any significant fiscal impact, although the Crime Victims Reparation Commission (CVRC) did note

that, “CVRC historically, has identified alternative methods to cover some of these expenses. CVRC does not expect any significant financial impact.”

The analysis provided by the Department of Health (DOH) indicates HB231 would not result in any direct financial implications for the department. The bill does not require additional appropriations, does not generate new revenue, and does not impact the department’s operating budget. Therefore, there are no anticipated costs or administrative burdens associated with the proposed amendments to the Crime Victims Reparation Act.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The expansion of eligible crimes under the Crime Victims Reparation Act could lead to an increased number of victim compensation applications. While the fiscal analysis provided by DOH and CVRC does not anticipate direct financial impacts, CVRC may experience a higher demand for funds, potentially necessitating future appropriations or policy adjustments to sustain victim support.

Data on violent crime in New Mexico indicates that the state’s aggravated assault and rape rates are significantly higher than national averages, suggesting a growing need for victim assistance. While the inclusion of additional offenses aligns with efforts to provide broader support, the legislation does not address underlying challenges, such as public awareness of victim compensation programs. Previous studies indicate many eligible victims are unaware of available financial assistance, with low application rates even among those who know about the program.

Disparities in victim compensation claims may persist, as data suggests younger, male, and ethnic minority victims are underrepresented among claimants. If broader eligibility does not translate into more equitable access, additional outreach efforts or procedural reforms may be necessary to ensure vulnerable populations benefit from the changes.

Finally, while HB231 does not allocate new funding, the long-term impact on the CVRC’s budget should be monitored. If compensation claims increase significantly, legislators may need to consider adjustments to funding levels or eligibility criteria to balance victim support with fiscal sustainability.

SS/rl/sgs