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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

<b>SPONSOR</b>	<u>McQueen</u>	<b>LAST UPDATED</b>	<u>1/24/2025</u>
		<b>ORIGINAL DATE</b>	
<b>SHORT TITLE</b>	<u>Session Length, Subjects &amp; Overrides, CA</u>	<b>BILL NUMBER</b>	<u>House Joint Resolution 1</u>
		<b>ANALYST</b>	<u>Hanika-Ortiz</u>

### ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT\*

(dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Election Costs	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund
Total	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.  
 \*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From  
 New Mexico Attorney General (NMAG)  
 Secretary of State (SOS)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of House Joint Resolution 1

House Joint Resolution 1 (HJR1) proposes an amendment to Article 4, Section 5, of the Constitution of New Mexico to provide that each regular session of the Legislature shall not exceed 45 days in length, removes the restrictions on bills that may be considered in even-numbered years, and provides for consideration of veto overrides for bills of a previous regular, special, or extraordinary legislative session within the same legislative biennium. If ratified by voters, the amendment would become part of the New Mexico Constitution and have legal force of law.

The joint resolution provides that the amendment be submitted to the electorate for approval at the next general election (November 2026) or at a special election called for the purpose of considering the amendment. The amendment would only be effective if approved by a majority of voters.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 1-16-4 NMSA 1978 and the New Mexico Constitution, the Secretary of State (SOS) must print samples of the text of each constitutional amendment in Spanish and English in an amount equal to 10 percent of registered voters in the state. SOS must also publish the samples once a week for four weeks before the election in newspapers in every county in the state. Further, the number of constitutional amendments on the ballot may impact the ballot page size or cause the ballot to be more than one page, increasing costs. The estimated cost per constitutional amendment is \$35 thousand to \$50 thousand, depending on the size and number of ballots and if additional ballot stations are needed.

Should this proposed constitutional amendment be approved by voters, a move to a 45-day session each fiscal year should result in savings in odd-numbered fiscal years and additional costs in even-numbered fiscal years that would balance out. The overall budget impact for the Legislature and legislative staff is therefore zero.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The amendment would eliminate the distinction between even- and odd-numbered year regular sessions and limit them both to 45 days. The proposed amendment would also remove subject matter restrictions on bills and allow veto override bills from any session within the same two-year period.

With some exceptions, Section 2-6-1 NMSA 1978 imposes a time limit within which bills may be introduced during sessions of the Legislature, limiting introduction of most bills to the 30<sup>th</sup> legislative day in regular sessions held in odd-numbered years and the 15<sup>th</sup> legislative day in regular sessions held in even-numbered years. This statute would remain in force, which may not give the Legislature enough time in certain fiscal years to consider bills and solicit public input. However, it might give the Legislature and legislative staff more time to finalize the General Appropriation Act than the time afforded now during the current short session length of 30 days.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS**

If HJR1 is ratified by voters, and until the change is fully adopted, there will be additional work for the Legislative Council Service while they update rules and procedures for the Legislature. Existing staff and budget resources should be able to accomplish this effort.

AHO/rl