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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Herndon LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_  
ORIGINAL DATE 3/3/25  
BILL  
SHORT TITLE Domestic Violence Service Gaps Study NUMBER House Bill 516  
ANALYST Chavez

### APPROPRIATION\* (dollars in thousands)

FY25	FY26	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$100.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

Parentheses ( ) indicate expenditure decreases.

\*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Relates to House Bill 57 and House Memorial 34.

### Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

Crime Victims Reparation Commission (CVRC)

## SUMMARY

### Synopsis of House Bill 516

House Bill 516 (HB516) appropriates \$100 thousand from the general fund to the Supreme Court for the purpose of convening a task force to study gaps in legal services for victims of domestic violence and make recommendations for the design and implementation of cost-effective legal programs to address those gaps.

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

The appropriation of \$100 thousand contained in this bill is a nonrecurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY26 shall revert to the general fund.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Providing a range of legal and non-legal resources is the most effective way to support victims of domestic violence. The United States Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs has found that victims who obtain permanent protection orders are 80 percent less likely to experience future abuse, and access to legal services increases the likelihood of securing such orders. Legal support at various court stages, including order enforcement, significantly impacts case outcomes. Collaboration among judicial officers, court personnel, attorneys, advocates, and community organizations are crucial in designing effective domestic violence programs for communities. Identifying gaps in systems designed to protect victims of domestic violence is essential to reducing domestic violence statewide.

The Administrative Office of the Courts provides the following:

A gap analysis of local resources is essential to identify crucial areas where current services, policies, and interventions are lacking. The needs of victims include fundamental needs, presenting needs, or accompanying needs. Addressing gaps in local resources will sustain the frontlines for victims, assist individuals in restoring harm, improve overall well-being, and satisfy victim needs. The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority states: “By addressing accompanying needs (e.g., childcare, transportation), providers reduce barriers to service utilization for victims and enable victims to progress towards fulfilling other higher-level needs (i.e., love, esteem, and self-actualization)”.

Regular gap analysis can help assess the effectiveness of existing programs and identify areas for improvement, promoting accountability and continuous quality improvement. It can also draw attention to the prevalence and severity of domestic violence, raising awareness about the issue and encouraging support for prevention efforts.

Collecting statewide statistics and data about domestic violence caseloads is essential to this effort. Statistics will assist the task force in identifying hotspots and communities with higher rates of domestic violence and will also assist with an effort to recommend reallocation of resources and crafting effective policies. Data provides evidence-based information to evaluate the impact of current resources and assess where they are most needed.

The United Nations organization UN Women states:

Data collection from monitoring the domestic violence law is essential for informing the work and approach of the authorities when it comes to preventing and responding to violence against women. In particular, it creates better coordination by identifying and improving practices not in compliance with national legislation and international standards, as well as identifying good practices that can be shared with authorities at local and central levels. Monitoring data is used to design new policies to protect and support victims, such as social services, health-care services, social welfare, legal services and other specialized services. Systematic data collection, which is done on a regular and long-term basis, serves as a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies whether they are working towards preventing and combating domestic violence.

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

The Crime Victims Reparation Commission (CVRC) provides the following:

HB57 would create a fund for legal representation of domestic abuse survivors. HB516 would inform the administration of that program by identifying representation needs generally.

HB516 relates to House Memorial 34 (HM34), which requests that the Supreme Court convene a statewide task force to study gaps in legal services for victims of domestic violence and make recommendations. HM34 provides more detail on the makeup of the task force as well as who to deliver the findings to.

## **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

CVRC provides the following:

CVRC provides financial services to victims of intimate partner violence and would benefit from a study on gaps in legal services for victims of intimate partner violence. Good data on survivors' needs is essential to ensuring that survivors receive the protection and support they need to seek justice and rebuild their lives. Despite existing legal frameworks, many victims face significant barriers to accessing legal assistance, including financial constraints, lack of awareness, and systemic inefficiencies. Identifying these gaps will provide critical data to inform policy changes, improve service delivery, and ensure that legal resources are accessible, culturally appropriate, and trauma-informed. By undertaking this study, CVRC and New Mexico generally can strengthen our response to intimate partner violence and uphold the rights and safety of survivors.

FC/rl/hj