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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR	Montoya/Brown/De La Cruz/Terrazas/Block	LAST UPDATED	
		ORIGINAL DATE	2/3/2025
		BILL	House Joint
SHORT TITLE	Legislative Session Changes, CA	NUMBER	Resolution 8
		ANALYST	Leger

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	Other state funds
Total	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	No fiscal impact	\$35.0 to \$50.0	Nonrecurring	Other state funds

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

Conflicts with House Joint Resolution 1.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Joint Resolution 8

House Joint Resolution 8 (HJR8) proposes to amend Article 4, Section 5, of the Constitution of New Mexico to provide that each regular session of the Legislature shall not exceed 45 days, removes the restrictions on bills that may be considered in even-numbered years, and provides for consideration of veto override bills also in certain special or extraordinary legislative sessions.

The joint resolution proposes the amendment be put before the voters at the next general election (November 2026) or a special election prior to that date called for the purpose of considering the amendment. The amendment would only be effective if approved by voters.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Under Section 1-16-4 NMSA 1978 and the New Mexico Constitution, the Secretary of State (SOS) is required to print samples of the text of each constitutional amendment in both Spanish and English in an amount equal to 10 percent of the registered voters in the state. SOS is required to publish the samples once a week for four weeks preceding 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, also 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 a previous regular, special, or extraordinary session within the same legislative biennium.

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 30th legislative day in regular sessions held in odd-numbered years and the 15th 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 Appropriations Act.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

If HJR8 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.

CONFLICT

House Joint Resolution 1 replicates HJR 8 except for the duration of veto override of bills from any session within the same two-year period.

JL/hj/SR/rl