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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Hochman-Vigil **LAST UPDATED** _____
ORIGINAL DATE 3/11/25
BILL House Memorial
SHORT TITLE Assess Blocked Train Crossing Times **NUMBER** 41
ANALYST Simon

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
		Up to \$500.0			Nonrecurring	State Road Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.

*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
Department of Transportation (NMDOT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Memorial 41

House Memorial 41 (HM41) requests the Department of Transportation (NMDOT) assess the amount of time train crossings in New Mexico are blocked by trains and that the department work with rail providers in the state to limit how long crossings are blocked.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Memorials do not carry appropriations and do not require that agencies undertake the action that is requested by the memorial. However, NMDOT states, were the department to perform the work requested by the memorial, the department would likely rely on a consultant to perform the work, which could cost \$500 thousand. NMDOT operational expenses are paid from the state road fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

HM41 notes traffic can often be blocked for significant periods—sometime up to 30 minutes—particularly in rural New Mexico. NMDOT notes New Mexico has about 700 railroad crossings on public roads, with a further 700 crossings on private roads. NMDOT notes the memorial is not clear on if private crossings should be considered within the scope of the assessment. However, memorials do not carry the force of law, and the department would have sufficient flexibility to determine the scope of the assessment. Further, the memorial requests NMDOT

“assess blocked train crossing times across the state” and does not necessarily request the department assess every train crossing. This flexibility could allow the department to prioritize selection of train crossings to ensure the project is cost-effective.

The department notes it might not have completed the assessment before September 1, 2025, the requested reporting date, because of the large number of crossings. The memorial request information be presented to the interim committee studying transportation issues. The Transportation Infrastructure Revenue Subcommittee is responsible for studying transportation issues during the interim.

The Federal Railroad Administration maintains a grant program to provide funding to state and local governments to eliminate rail crossings or provide protective equipment and signals at crossings to improve the safety and mobility of people and goods. Assessment of these crossings could provide data that could be used on future applications for these funds. Recently, three projects in New Mexico were awarded funds, including:

- The city of Clovis was awarded \$1 million to eliminate a crossing near the BNSF Clovis Yard.
- McKinley County was awarded \$3.3 million to evaluate potential overpasses at 10 railroad crossings in McKinley and Cibola counties. The local match for this project was partially funded by the New Mexico match fund.
- NMDOT was awarded \$44.9 million to construct bridge-related improvements over the BNSF line for the Allison Road corridor project in Gallup. Local match for this project was partially funded by the New Mexico match fund, with BNSF and the city of Gallup also contributing.

JWS/hj/hg/sgs