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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR <u>Ferrary</u>	LAST UPDATED <u>3/13/25</u> ORIGINAL DATE <u>3/12/25</u>
SHORT TITLE <u>Trinity Site Rest Stop</u>	BILL NUMBER <u>House Memorial 50/aHTPWC</u>
ANALYST <u>Simon</u>	

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT* (dollars in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY25	FY26	FY27	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
		Indeterminate but minimal				

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

Relates to House Joint Memorial 8

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From

Tourism Department (NMTD) (on House Joint Memorial 8)

Agency Analysis was Solicited but Not Received From

Department of Transportation (NMDOT)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of HTPWC Amendment to House Memorial 50

The House Transportation, Public Works and Capital Improvements Committee amendment to House Memorial 50 (HM50) removes references to constructing a rest stop or installing an informational plaque and instead requests the Department of Transportation (NMDOT) study the construction of a rest stop and installation of an informational plaque.

Synopsis of House Memorial 50

House Memorial 50 (HM50) requests the Department of Transportation (NMDOT) construct a rest stop on US-380 at the entrance to the Trinity Site near Bingham in honor of downwinders impacted by the detonation of atomic weapons.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Memorials do not carry appropriations nor the weight of law. While the construction and maintenance of a new rest stop would likely require a significant investment of either general fund or state road fund dollars, NMDOT may be able to perform a feasibility study for much less. Study costs would likely vary by the scope of the anticipated improvements needed. A cost

estimate for the study from NMDOT is not immediately available, but the request in the memorial is likely flexible enough to allow the department to design the study in a cost-effective manner.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The Trinity Site, on the White Sands missile range in southern New Mexico, was the site of the first atomic weapon detonation on July 16, 1945. HM50 notes currently there is no historic marker, routinely accessible to the public, commemorating the historic significance of the site. Additionally, the memorial requests the site be dedicated to “downwinders” residents of nearby counties. According to the National Park Service, residents of Lincoln, Socorro, Otero, and Sierra counties have reported cancer diagnoses in people with no prior family history and other diseases, such as heart disease. Residents of the area have lobbied for inclusion in the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, which provides compensation for medical treatment related to radiation exposure. That act currently only covers exposure from uranium mining or exposure from testing in Nevada. The memorial requests NMDOT hold a dedication ceremony on July 16, 2025, the 80th anniversary of the detonation, and extend invitations to nearby residents impacted by the detonation and their families.

The Tourism Department provides the following analysis for a similar memorial, which may relate to the feasibility of the proposed site:

The Trinity Site is within the White Sands Missile Range and is only open to the public twice a year. A rest stop and memorial may attract tourists who expect year-round access. Additionally, Highway 380 is a remote area with limited services. Increased tourism could create demands for additional infrastructure, such as restrooms, security, and emergency response services.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

Recently, the department began a \$20 million project to demolish and replace the Rattlesnake Rest Area on Interstate 40 in Torrance County. The total cost of a rest area at the site proposed could be more accurately estimated by the study.

JWS/hg/sgs/hj/hg/sgs