

A vertical photograph of a university building's tower, featuring a red dome and arched windows, with a maroon color overlay. The name "GODDARD" is visible on the building's facade.

# **NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM LEGISLATIVE SESSION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FY26**

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**APRIL 2025**

**OFFICE OF  
GOVERNMENT AND  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

The New Mexico State Legislature has approved a recurring general revenue state budget of \$10.7 billion for Fiscal Year 26. This budget provides funding for a 4 percent salary increase for state employees, including higher education faculty and staff. Additionally, the budget appropriates \$3.857 million to the Higher Education Department (HED) for distribution to two-year and four-year public postsecondary institutions to cover the employer share of medical insurance rate increases. Higher education will also receive \$1.4 billion in recurring general revenue appropriations, benefiting HED and institutions across New Mexico. Notable allocations within this budget include \$168 million for the Opportunity Scholarship, \$34.9 million for student financial aid, and \$9.1 million for an adult literacy program, along with various other educational initiatives. Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed, with partial vetoes, the budget and a \$1.2 billion capital outlay package, which contains \$31.6 million for brick-and-mortar projects and equipment purchases for the New Mexico State University (NMSU) system.

The approved budget for NMSU includes \$214.8 million in recurring instruction and general support for the main campus and its branches, resulting in an increase of \$7 million, or 3.4 percent, compared to the previous year. This funding is crucial for providing essential academic and administrative support, as well as for funding graduate student support (\$718 thousand across four-year institutions with \$231.3 thousand for NMSU-Main Campus) and wrap-around services for students (\$3 million across all Higher Education Institutions with \$584 thousand to Main Campus, \$31.8 thousand to the Alamogordo Campus, \$107.3 thousand to Doña Ana, and \$15.7 thousand to the Grants Campus). Additionally, the universities' non-instruction and general programs, such as athletics, educational television, teacher preparation, tribal education, and agricultural entities, are allocated a total of \$67.5 million in recurring general revenue funds, representing an increase of \$1.9 million, or 2.9 percent, over the prior year.

The table below outlines the details of the total recurring general revenue budget of \$282.3 million for instruction and non-instruction and general support approved for NMSU for Fiscal Year 26.

Institution/Program	FY25 Final Operating Budget	FY26 Approved Operating Budget	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Instruction and General</b>				
Instruction and General – Main	\$164,341.5	\$170,475.1	\$6,133.6	3.7%
Alamogordo Branch Campus	\$8,922.9	\$9,003.6	\$80.7	0.9%
Dona Ana Branch Campus	\$30,138.2	\$30,838.8	\$700.6	2.3%
Grants Branch Campus	\$4,409.0	\$4,476.0	\$67.0	1.5%
<b>Total Instruction and General</b>	<b>\$207,811.6</b>	<b>\$214,793.5</b>	<b>\$6,981.9</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Non-Instruction and General</b>				
Athletics	\$7,816.2	\$7,816.2	-	-
Educational TV and Public Radio	\$1,478.1	\$1,478.1	-	-
New Mexico Tribal Education - Main	\$300.0	\$300.0	-	-
New Mexico Teacher Pipeline - Main	\$250.0	\$250.0	-	-
New Mexico Tribal Grants - Branch	\$100.0	\$100.0	-	-
Department of Agriculture	\$17,433.2	\$18,043.4	\$610.2	3.5%
Agricultural Experimental Station	\$20,735.1	\$21,460.8	\$725.7	3.5%
Cooperative Extension Service	\$17,489.0	\$18,064.0	\$575.0	3.3%
<b>Total Non-Instruction and General</b>	<b>\$65,601.6</b>	<b>\$67,512.5</b>	<b>\$1,910.9</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
<b>Total Instruction and Non-Instruction</b>	<b>\$273,413.2</b>	<b>\$282,306.0</b>	<b>\$8,892.8</b>	<b>3.3%</b>

Additionally, the budget for NMSU includes \$15.8 million in recurring support for research and public service projects. This funding features a \$1 million recurring increase for the Produced Water Consortium initiative compared to the previous year, as well as \$400,000 in recurring funding for the newly created nursing program at NMSU-Alamogordo. The summary is as follows:

<b>Research &amp; Public Service Projects<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Allocation</b>
Nurse Expansion	\$2,081.2
Autism	\$1,140.7
Sunspot Solar Observatory Consortium	\$402.0
STEM Alliance for Minority Participation	\$382.0
Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	\$1,315.0
Water Resource Research Institute	\$1,256.8
Indian Resources Development	\$284.3
Manufacturing Sector Development Program	\$687.2
Arrowhead Center for Business Development	\$397.1
Alliance Teaching & Learning Advancement	\$221.9
College Assistance Migrant Program	\$307.9
Dona Ana Branch – Dental Hygiene	\$557.5
Dona Ana Branch – Nurse Expansion	\$928.9
Center of Excellence Sustainable Agriculture	\$513.7
Anna Age Eight Institute	\$2,133.9
Produced Water Consortium	\$2,242.8
Nurse Anesthesiology	\$500.0
Alamogordo Branch – Nurse Expansion	\$400.0
<b>Total Research &amp; Public Service Projects</b>	<b>\$15,752.9</b>

For Fiscal Year 26, the total recurring general revenue budget for the university is \$298.1 million as summarized below:

<b>New Mexico State University</b>	
Instruction and General – Main Campus	\$170,475.1
Instruction and General – Branch Campuses	\$44,318.4
Non-Instruction and General – Other Initiatives	\$67,512.5
Research & Public Service Initiatives	\$15,752.9
<b>Total FY26 Recurring Budget Initiatives</b>	<b>\$298,058.9</b>

<sup>1</sup> Reference: House Bill 2, Section J – Higher Education

## **Special Appropriations – Nonrecurring Initiatives<sup>2</sup>**

### Higher Education Department

The New Mexico Legislature's approval of \$1.4 billion in nonrecurring special appropriations demonstrates a commitment to investing in the state's future, targeting key areas such as education, agriculture, and community resources. Among this funding, HED is set to receive \$94.5 million aimed at bolstering the infrastructure and support systems of higher education institutions across New Mexico.

A substantial portion of this allocation—\$43 million—is designated for the renewal, replacement, and demolition of aging buildings and equipment. This funding is critical for modernizing educational facilities, ensuring they provide a safe and effective learning environment for students and faculty.

Additionally, \$27 million has been allocated to loan repayment programs designed to encourage graduates to pursue careers in critical fields such as healthcare and education. Of this amount, \$1.6 million is designated for the veterinarian loan program, which is vital for NMSU. This program helps attract and retain skilled professionals in veterinary medicine, addressing the state's need for qualified veterinarians in remote and rural areas and supporting the overall health and welfare of animals and communities in New Mexico.

The \$14.9 million designated for mental health training, internship opportunities, financial aid, and career development initiatives aims to enhance access to higher education, allowing more students to achieve academic success. Of this amount, \$2.7 million is allocated to New Mexico's community colleges and regional universities to assist with program development costs for workforce training programs. Additionally, \$3 million is set aside to support scholarships, financial aid, and other resources for counseling students who require behavioral health or addiction support during their practicums.

Lastly, the allocation of \$10 million for the Technology Enhancement Fund reflects the state's continued interest in supporting research, commercialization, and technology transfer at the state's three research universities. The funding provided there will allow HED to provide awards to universities to meet the required match of major federal grants.

Overall, the \$94.5 million investment signals a commitment to enhancing educational opportunities, addressing workforce needs, and modernizing infrastructure for New Mexico's higher education institutions.

### New Mexico State University

NMSU's share of \$31 million in nonrecurring support highlights the university's role in driving innovation and community development. A \$2 million investment in an Institute of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning will put NMSU on the map in this developing space. Additionally, just over \$4 million was provided to renovate the Genesis A Lab to provide an innovative research facility for the university's water researchers. This funding is coupled with an additional \$4 million to conduct research and develop projects that will support the state's Strategic Water Supply Initiative.

The Acequia and Community Ditch Fund, managed by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, is set to receive \$1.2 million. This funding supports traditional water management

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<sup>2</sup> Reference: House Bill 2, Section 5 – Special Appropriations, Higher Education

systems that are essential for agriculture in New Mexico. The \$830,000 for the Department of Agriculture youth leadership and supplier programs, and management of livestock trichomoniasis, is designed to enhance opportunities for young leaders in agriculture, bolster local food systems between producers and suppliers, and support livestock health and reproductive success.

Moreover, the budget allocates \$3.3 million for meat processing grants, addressing essential needs in food security. Additionally, \$9 million is designated for soil and water conservation districts, which supports sustainable land management and conservation practices while \$5 million is earmarked for optimizing agricultural production in the face of limited water resources.

An allocation of \$450,000 is also provided to the Department of Range and Animal Sciences to support veterinary scholarships, internships, and residency programs. Lastly, \$1.5 million is earmarked for debt elimination in athletics, aiding in the resolution of a long-standing debt that has hindered the department's ability to maintain a balanced budget.

<b>NMSU Special Appropriations</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
Department of Agriculture Acequia and Community Ditch Fund	\$1,200
Department of Agriculture Youth Leadership Statewide Programs	\$300
Department of Agriculture Supplier Program	\$430
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning	\$2,000
Department of Agriculture – Bovine Reproductive Disease	\$100
Department of Agriculture – Meat Processing	\$3,300
Resources for Water Treatment	\$4,015
Department of Agriculture – Soil and Water Conservation Districts	\$9,000
Strategic Water Supply Program	\$4,000
Debt Elimination for Athletics	\$1,500
Department of Range and Animal Sciences	\$450
Department of Agriculture for Agricultural Production Support	\$5,000
<b>Total NMSU Special Appropriations</b>	<b>\$31,295</b>

### **Other Non-recurring Appropriations<sup>3</sup>**

The allocation of \$20 million to the HED from the Government Results and Opportunity (GRO) fund speaks volumes about the focus and commitment to improving student retention. This funding, spread over three years, is designed to incentivize institutions to improve the overall student experience and ensure that more students successfully complete their educational programs. As part of this initiative, there is a continued emphasis on retention and outcomes rather than admissions and enrollment, highlighting the importance of student success and support to lawmakers.

NMSU is also set to receive \$999,000 in GRO funds for the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), which is, coincidentally, a model retention and graduation initiative. CAMP is designed to provide support for migrant and seasonal farmworker students through cohort grouping, intensive counseling, and faculty support. This funding will play a crucial role in helping these students successfully transition into higher education and complete their

<sup>3</sup> Reference: House Bill, Section 9 – Government Results and Opportunity Expendable Trust, Higher Education

academic program of study, while also utilizing the Opportunity Scholarship as an incentive to recruit those students that did not complete the program but now can, using state support towards tuition.

Lastly in the GRO section, the state continues to invest in NMSU Global's online infrastructure, with \$12 million appropriated to the university to support the development of a statewide model for online courses. This initiative will make education more accessible to all students while minimizing duplication of effort and redundancy among the state's higher education institutions.

### **Capital Outlay Appropriations – \$31.6 million**

The following table represents capital outlay projects for the main campus and branch campuses as approved for FY26. Any items with a strikethrough reflect items that were vetoed by the Governor:

<b>Main Campus</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>
*Biomedical Research Building Construction	\$4,500,000
Campus Safety Improvements	\$1,525,000
Atkinson Hall Lighting Replacement	\$550,000
Kinesiology Anatomage Purchase	\$220,000
<del>O'Donnell Hall and Health &amp; Social Services Building</del>	<del>\$50,000</del>
*O'Donnell Hall Renovate	\$1,500,000
Pan American Center Handrails Purchase	\$50,000
<del>Pan American Center Repair</del>	<del>\$50,000</del>
*Cole Village Demolition	\$10,000,000
STEM Outreach Center Purchase	\$50,000
Golf Course Improvements	\$50,000
*Water System Infrastructure Improvements	\$7,000,000
<b>Total Main Campus</b>	<b>\$25,445,000</b>
<b>Branch Campuses</b>	
<del>Grants – Fidel Hall HVAC Install</del>	<del>\$25,000</del>
*Dona Ana Espina Campus Steam Infrastructure Replacement	\$1,475,000
<del>Alamogordo Water and Sewer System Improvements</del>	<del>\$150,000</del>
<b>Total Branch Campuses</b>	<b>\$1,475,000</b>
<b>Total Main and Branch Campuses<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>\$26,920,000</b>

This funding reflects a commitment to improving infrastructure, safety, and educational resources across both the main and branch campuses, enhancing student excellence throughout the campus community.

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<sup>4</sup> Projects marked with an asterisk (\*) were included in the university's capital outlay legislative budget request for Fiscal Year 26 and received approval from the Higher Education Department.

The \$1.1 million for the Ag Science Centers includes funding for various equipment purchases across several locations. The breakdown is as follows:

- Clovis Ag Science Center Equipment Purchases: \$411,000
- Mora Ag Science Center Equipment: \$50,000
- Tucumcari Ag Science Center Equipment Purchase: \$470,000
- Farmington Ag Science Center Equipment Purchase: \$85,000
- Los Lunas Ag Science Center Equipment Purchase: \$100,000

Finally, the allocations for athletics at NMSU include several projects aimed at upgrading facilities and enhancing athletic programs. Here is a detailed breakdown of the appropriations:

<b>Athletics Projects</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>
Aggie Memorial Stadium Parking Lot Upgrades	\$50,000
Baseball/Softball Turf Replacement	\$2,000,000
Baseball Facility Upgrades	\$50,000
Coca Cola Weight Training Facility Upgrade	\$225,000
<del>Golf Team Practice Facility Construction</del>	<del>\$50,000</del>
Women's Athletics Facility Improvements	\$150,000
Women's Soccer Facility Upgrades	\$145,000
Women's Softball/Soccer Facility Construction	\$450,000
Women's Volleyball Facility Upgrade	\$300,000
<b>Total for Athletics</b>	<b>\$3,320,000</b>

The investment in athletic facilities is designed to improve training environments, enhance spectator experiences, and support the overall development of NMSU's athletic programs, promoting a strong athletic culture within the university.

## **Appendix**

**Below is a comparison between the non-recurring initiatives supported for the HED by the House Appropriations and Finance Committee and the Senate Finance Committee – Substitutes for House Bill 2.**

**Unless otherwise stated, all non-recurring initiatives and related appropriations supported by the House Appropriations and Finance Committee were endorsed by the Senate Finance Committee.**

### **House Appropriations and Finance Committee**

#### **Section 5 – Special Appropriations**

- Behavior Health Career Development Program - \$1,000,000
- Support for Practicums for Behavior Health or Addiction for Student Counseling - \$3,000,000
- Building renewal, replacement, and facility demolition; equipment renewal and replacement - \$43,000,000
- Health Professional Loan Repayment Program - \$20,000,000
- Teacher Loan Repayment Program - \$5,000,000
- ~~\*Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program—\$2,000,000~~ (Senate reduced to \$1,550,000, with the difference appearing as an appropriation to NMSU's Department of Range and Animal Sciences)
- High School Equivalency Tests, Tribal Dual Credit, and Career Pathways - \$2,450,000
- Non-Credit Workforce Training Program Development Costs for New Mexico community colleges and regional universities - \$2,700,000
- Partnership with New Mexico College of Osteopathic Medicine to support Comprehensive Outreach Program - \$3,000,000
- Technology Enhancement Fund - \$10,000,000
- Expansion of New Mexico Workforce Training Economic Support Pilot Program - \$2,000,000
- ~~Economic Development Department Research, Development and Deployment Fund—\$50,000,000~~ (Senate reduced to \$40,000,000)
- Public Education Department Grow Your Own Teacher Program – \$20,000,000
- Public Education Department Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Network – \$3,000,000
- Economic Development Department for site characterization and predevelopment assessment, for expenditure over three years, for assessing potential economic development sites – \$24,000,000
- Department of Information Technology for cybersecurity initiatives including higher education institutions – up to \$7,500,000 for the consortium of higher education institutions statewide

#### **Section 7 – Information Technology**

- No funds allocated by the House Appropriations and Finance Committee; the Senate provided \$9 million for two projects, the community college-led CHESS initiative and funding for HED's longitudinal data system.



## **Section 9 – GRO Expendable Trust**

- Student Retention Initiative – Year 1 - \$4,500,000
- Student Retention Initiative – Year 2 - \$6,500,000
- Student Retention Initiative – Year 3 - \$9,000,000

## **Senate Finance Committee**

### **Section 5 - Special Appropriations**

- Administrative support for state-funded higher education institutions in New Mexico - \$750,000
- \*Veterinary Loan Repayment Fund - \$1,550,000

### **Section 7 - Information Technology**

- Higher Education Shared Service Project - \$6,000,000
- Continuation of Longitudinal Data System Project - \$3,000,000

### **Section 9 – Expendable Trust**

- N/A

**Below is a comparison between the initiatives initially supported for New Mexico State University by the House Appropriations and Finance Committee and the Senate Finance Committee – Substitutes for House Bill 2.**

## **House Appropriations and Finance Committee**

### **Section 5 – Special Appropriations**

- Acequia and Community Ditch Fund - \$1,200,000
- Department of Agriculture Supplier Program - \$430,000
- Institute of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning - \$2,000,000
- Department of Agriculture – Grants for Meat Processing - \$3,300,000
- Resources for Water Treatment - \$4,015,000
- Department of Agriculture for Soil and Water Conservation Districts - \$9,000,000
- Strategic Water Supply Program - \$4,000,000
- \*Student Athletic Costs—\$6,000,000 (Senate reduced to \$1,500,000)
- The period of time for expending the ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) appropriated from the general fund in Subsection 232 of Section 5 of Chapter 210 of Laws 2023 as extended in Subsection 228 of Section 5 of Chapter 69 of Laws 2024 for land acquisition, planning, design and construction of the New Mexico reforestation center is extended through fiscal year 2028.

### **Section 7 – Information Technology**

- No funds allocated.

### **Section 9 – Expendable Trust**

- College Assistance Migrant Program – Year 1 - \$333,000
- College Assistance Migrant Program – Year 2 - \$333,000
- College Assistance Migrant Program – Year 3 - \$333,000

### **Senate Finance Committee**

### **Section 5 – Special Appropriations**

- Department of Agriculture Youth Leadership Statewide Programs - \$300,000
- Department of Agriculture – Eradicate Bovine Reproductive Disease Trichomoniasis - \$100,000
- \*Debt Elimination for Athletics - \$1,500,000 (As opposed to the HAFC-proposed \$6 million for three years)
- Department of Range and Animal Sciences - \$450,000
- Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Production - \$5,000,000
- Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department Archaeological Field School Education - \$300,000 (to contract with the Department of Agriculture)

### **Section 7 – Information Technology**

- No funds allocated.

### **Section 9 – Expendable Trust**

- Statewide Online Education Program – \$12,000,000
- Other Higher Education Related Appropriations

## **Key Legislation Outcomes for Higher Education and NMSU**

The recent New Mexico Legislative Session brought significant developments for the New Mexico State University (NMSU) System and higher education across the state. While several impactful bills were successfully passed, bringing funding, programs, and long-term investment opportunities, others ultimately stalled in committee or on the legislative calendar.

Below is a summary of key legislation that advanced, as well as notable proposals that did not make it through this year's session including the bill sponsor and the status of the legislation.

### **Passed Legislation**

#### **Legislation with Significant Impact or Importance to the NMSU System:**

- **HB 2 – General Appropriations Act (Small, Dixon)**

Allocates \$298.1 million in recurring general revenue for the NMSU System, along with \$31.3 million in special appropriations and \$13 million in GRO funding. With SB 242 (Advancing the Science of Reading Act) failing to pass, HB 2 received a late amendment allowing that the HED, in consultation with the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), the state budget division of the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), and the Public Education Department, may reduce general fund appropriations, up to fifty percent, to institutions who do not adopt and implement the science of reading and structured literacy instruction techniques to teacher education programs.

Status: Signed by the Governor with partial vetoes.

- **HB 450 – Capital Outlay Projects (Lente)**

Provides \$25.6 million for capital projects on the main campus, \$1.6 million for branch campuses, \$1 million for Agricultural Science Centers, and \$3.4 million for athletics facilities.

Status: Signed by the Governor with partial vetoes.

- **HB 449 – Higher Education Major Projects Fund (Lente, Campos)**

Creates the Higher Education Major Projects Fund to support large capital projects at public colleges and universities. Four-year institutions can apply for projects costing \$50 million or more related to instruction, research, and general purposes, while four-year, two-year, and tribal colleges are eligible for funding for student housing and student life projects, with waivers allowed and design standards enforced by the HED.

- For the design phase funding institutions shall provide the following:
  - At least 25% match from sources other than the state for major instructional and general and research purposes
  - At least 50% match from sources other than the state for student housing and student life projects
- For construction phase funding institutions shall provide the following:
  - At least 10% match from sources other than the state for major instruction and general and research purposes for student housing and student life projects
  - At least 50% match from sources other than the state for two-year educational institutions and tribal colleges

- At least 20% match from sources other than the state for four-year institutions

An additional \$250,000 is appropriated to the HED in HB 450 (Capital Outlay Projects) to develop universal space and design standards for student housing and student life projects.

Status: Vetoed by the Governor

- **HB 20 – Technology and Innovation Division (Dixon, Small)**  
Creates a new division and advisory board focused on research and development across strategic sectors, including aerospace, biosciences, clean energy, water, and advanced computing (e.g., AI, quantum computing, cybersecurity). HB2 includes a \$40 million non-recurring appropriation to the Economic Development Department for the Research, Development, and Deployment Fund that was contingent upon the passage of HB 20. This fund will allow Higher Education research institutions to apply for matching funds as required with certain federal grants.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 137 – Strategic Water Supply Act (Herrera, Munoz)**  
Calls for an appropriation of \$75 million for projects related to deep brackish water, with \$4 million specifically designated for NMSU to support related research. HB 2 includes a fund transfer of \$40 million from the General Fund to the Strategic Water Supply Fund to support the strategic water supply program, and a special appropriation of \$4 million to NMSU.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 181 – State Trust Program Accountability Plan (Small)**  
Requires agencies receiving GRO funding to submit accountability and evaluation plans to the LFC and DFA by July 1 of the appropriation year. There are two GRO items that are specific to NMSU that will likely require reporting, which are the three-year tranche to the College Assistance Migrant Program and the one-year appropriation for NMSU to implement a statewide online education program.

Status: Vetoed by the Governor.

- **HB 156 – Increase Educational Salaries (Garratt, Stewart)**  
Raises the minimum salaries for teachers, school counselors, and administrators by \$5,000. With the failure of SB 242 (Advancing the Science of Reading Act) to pass, HB 156 was amended to require public postsecondary teacher preparation programs to include instruction in the *science of reading* and *structured literacy*, including at least 100 hours of supervised field experience for elementary teacher candidates.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **SB 8 – Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program (Woods, Lujan, Vincent)**

Creates the Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program to help address shortages of food-animal veterinarians in underserved areas of New Mexico. HED, in coordination with a selection committee, may award up to \$80,000 per recipient over four years to repay veterinary school loans for eligible veterinarians working in designated areas. Appropriates \$1,550,000 to HED to administer the program and \$450,000 to New Mexico State University to support the state extension veterinarian's role in program oversight and selection. The appropriation to NMSU is directed to the Department of Range and Animal Sciences.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **SB 19 – Regent Training Requirements (Steinborn, Ramos)**

Requires all members of the boards of regents and governing boards of New Mexico's public postsecondary institutions to complete ten hours of training within the first six months of their terms. HED will develop, provide, and monitor the training, which includes topics such as governance, budgeting, ethics, and student success.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **SB 535 – State Fees & Funds (Munoz, Sedillo Lopez)**

Raises fees, including the Workers' Compensation fee, 911 surcharge, and telecom relay surcharge, to fund state services and creates a 988 Lifeline Fund for mental health crisis support. It also enacts the Supported Decision-Making Act, allowing adults with disabilities to designate supporters to help them make decisions while maintaining their rights. This is expected to come at a cost to the University system as the workers' compensation fee increases should apply to our institutions.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

### **Relevant or Other Tracked Legislation:**

- **HB 143 – Lobbying Activity Reports (Steinborn, Silva)**

Requires lobbyists, or employers of lobbyists, to file an activity report on legislation that the filer either lobbies in support of or in opposition to. Specifically, HB 143 requires reporting to the Secretary of State within 48 hours of lobbying activity and before the end of the legislative session.

Status: Vetoed by the Governor.

- **HB 64 – Expand Post-Secondary Tuition Eligibility (E. Chavez, Trujillo)**

Expands the scope of the nondiscrimination policy for higher education. Provides that no state post-secondary institution shall deny admission to a student on account of immigration status.

Status: Vetoed by the Governor.

- **HB 65 – Instructional Days in School Year (Armstrong, Dow)**  
Allows for local school boards to determine the total number of instructional days per year and number of instructional days per week that students will be in school programs. The Governor's veto was overridden by the House with the Senate unable to take action before Sine Die; this effectively means the Governor's veto stands and the bill does not become law.

Status: Vetoed by the Governor.

- **HB 69 – Loan Forgiveness Multiplier Act (Garratt, Jaramillo)**  
Creates the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Multiplier Act. Defines full-time work for adjunct faculty as working 30 hours per week. Requires institutions to calculate full-time status by multiplying the number of credit hours by a minimum of 4.35 so that an instructor teaching one three-credit-hour course would be credited with 13.05 hours of work.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 89 Graduate Scholarships Act Changes (Hochman-Vigil, Roybal Caballero)**  
Amends the Graduate Scholarship Act by requiring recipients to be NM residents, removes requirement to be U.S. citizen, requires bachelor's degree with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, enrolled at least six credit hours, removes unpaid internship requirement, allows scholarship to be awarded until completion of degree, and removes a cap of \$7,200 per year.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 101 – Firearm at Polling Place for Law Enforcement (Reeb, Chavez, Terrazas)**  
Amends unlawful possession of a firearm at a polling place to include an exception for a commissioned law enforcement officer.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 218 – Tax Changes (Lente)**  
Extensive administrative cleanup to taxation statutes, clarifies conflicting statutes, repeals unused or expired sections, and streamlines administrative statutes.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HJR 2 - Eliminate Pocket Vetoes, CA (McQueen, Cervantes, Montoya, Woods, Szczepanski)**  
Proposed constitutional amendment that would require the Governor to provide a written explanation for any full or partial veto. It would also ensure that any bill not acted on by the governor becomes law, including those passed in the final days of the legislative session.

Status: The amendment proposed by this resolution shall be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection at the next general election or at any special election prior to that date that may be called for that purpose.

- **HM 2 - LESC Artificial Intelligence Work Group (Garratt, Baca, Gurrola)**

Memorial that requests the Legislative Education Study Committee to convene a working group on education data governance and artificial intelligence during the 2025 interim. The group will study ways to improve the coordination, quality, privacy, and interoperability of education data systems statewide and recommend policies for the responsible use of AI in schools. A final report with recommendations is due by October 31, 2025.

Status: Passed the House of Representatives, the Legislative Education Study Committee will likely convene a work group per the memorial.

- **SB 16 – Non-Major Party Voters in Primary Elections (Figueroa, Wirth, Cates, Parajon, Rubio)**

Amends state election law to allow voters who are unaffiliated or affiliated with a minor political party to participate in primary elections by selecting a major party ballot at the time of voting. Requires updates to registration procedures, absentee ballot requests, and polling protocols to enable real-time party affiliation changes during primaries. Becomes effective July 1, 2025.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **SB 169 – Strategic Economic Development Site Readiness (Padilla, Dixon, Hernandez, Brandt, Garratt)**

Creates the Strategic Economic Development Site Readiness Act and a \$75 million fund to support site studies and pre-development projects that prepare New Mexico locations for economic growth. The program is managed by the Economic Development Department with input from a multi-agency advisory committee.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

- **HB 167 - Higher Education Payment for Certain Tests (Garratt, Torres-Velasquez, Tobiassen)**

Requires HED to cover the cost of high school equivalency tests and related prep for eligible New Mexico residents and appropriates \$2 million for that purpose. Mandates that teacher preparation programs include science of reading instruction, with at least 100 hours of supervised field experience for elementary candidates and establishes oversight to ensure alignment with state literacy standards.

Status: Signed by the Governor.

### **Stalled Legislation**

- **HB 11 – Paid Family & Medical Leave Act (Stewart, Chandler, Martinez)**

Proposed the "Welcome Child and Family Wellness Leave Act", which would have created a state-run paid leave program for eligible workers. Although HB 11 passed the House, the bill failed to advance in the Senate Finance Committee. The bill underwent multiple amendments before stalling. Notably, it:

- Created two funds, the *Family Wellness Leave Fund* and the *Welcome Child Fund*, administered by the Department of Workforce Solutions.

- Allowed eligible employees and self-employed individuals to receive up to 6 weeks of family wellness leave and up to 12 weeks of parental bonding leave.
- Provided a \$3,000 welcome child benefit payable over three months following the birth or adoption of a child.
- Included types of leave like bereavement, foster placement, medical, domestic violence-related safe leave, and military exigency leave.
- Set up employer and employee contribution structures starting in 2027, with benefits beginning January 2028.
- Included an amendment to reduce the number of weeks to 6 weeks, restructure how benefits are paid, and create a waiver process for employers offering comparable private leave programs.
- The contribution to the family wellness leave fund starts at 0.2 percent of wages from employees and 0.15 percent of wages from employers with five or more employees. Starting in 2030 the premium rate will be adjusted annually based on solvency, with 55% of the premium paid by employers and 45% by employees.
- Established a temporary advisory committee to guide implementation and rulemaking.

While the standalone bill failed, its policy framework remains active in public conversation and may reappear in future sessions.

Status: Failed in Senate Finance

- **HB 60 – Artificial Intelligence Act (Chandler)**

Proposed a regulatory framework for AI systems.

Status: Stalled on House Calendar

- **HB 84 – Employee Free Speech Act (E. Chavez, Duhigg)**

Aimed to protect employees from employer coercion regarding political or religious activities.

Status: Stalled in Senate Judiciary

- **SB 148 / SB 10 – Anti-Hazing Acts (Maestas, Pope)**

Both bills sought to criminalize hazing and create consequences for failure to report. Versions differed slightly in penalties and structure.

Status: Both stalled in Senate Judiciary

- **SB 242 – Advancing the Science of Reading Act (Steinborn)**

Creates the Advancing of Science of Reading Act in Public Schools. The legislation establishes course and experience requirements for teacher licensure. Requires teacher experience, course and credit hour requirements, alignment with a structured literacy approach, and bans the balanced literacy approaches to teaching reading. Although this legislation did not pass, elements of it were included in HB 2 (General Appropriations Act) as referenced above.

Status: Stalled in House Education



- **SJR 7 – Regent Nominating Committees (Constitutional Amendment) (Steinborn)**

Proposed requiring the Governor to appoint university regents from a list provided by a nominating committee.

Status: Stalled in Senate Judiciary

- **SB 107 – STEM Center of Excellence at NMSU (Pope, Garratt)**  
Creates a Center of Excellence at NMSU for STEM innovation and establishes a statewide STEM Innovation Network with regional and tribal hubs. NMSU will serve as the principal hub, coordinating education and career pathways in STEM. A steering committee of state, tribal, and education leaders will guide the network. Though the bill stalled in Senate Finance, HB2 includes \$3 million appropriation to the Public Education Department for the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Network.

Status: Stalled in Senate Finance

- **SB 266 – Higher Ed. Agreement Approval & Review (Munoz, Hamblen)**

Sought to mandate that certain employment contracts by boards of regents be reviewed and approved by the State Board of Finance.

Status: Stalled in Senate Finance

- **HB 315 – Archaeology Field School Education Program (Terrazas, Dow, Vincent, Ramos, Hernandez)**  
Appropriates \$250,000 to NMSU's Board of Regents for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture to collaborate with the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Department of Cultural Affairs to develop a statewide archaeology field school education program. While this bill did not make it through committee, HB 2 includes a \$20 million appropriation to the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department for forest management, restoration, thinning, and vegetation management—including \$300,000 specifically allocated to NMDA, in coordination with the Department of Cultural Affairs, to develop the archaeology field school program statewide for FY26.

Status: Stalled in House Appropriations and Finance Committee