

LFC Requester:	Sunny Liu
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**AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS
2017 REGULAR SESSION**

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, EMAIL ANALYSIS TO:

LFC@NMLEGIS.GOV

and

DFA@STATE.NM.US

{Include the bill no. in the email subject line, e.g., HB2, and only attach one bill analysis and related documentation per email message}

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Check all that apply:

Original	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date	<u>1-30-17</u>
Correction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill No:	<u>SB170</u>

Sponsor:	<u>Senator Mimi Stewart</u>	Agency Code:	<u>924</u>
Short Title:	<u>INCREASE SCHOOL STUDENT WALKING DISTANCE</u>	Person Writing	<u>Aguilar/Ortiz</u>
		Phone:	<u>505-827-6519</u>
		Email	<u>Paulj.aguilar@state.nm.us</u>

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY17	FY18	FY19	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total	(Indeterminate)	(Indeterminate)			Recurring	District Transportation Budgets

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: SB-170 is directly related to solvency for FY17 and FY18. The bill adds a temporary provision to extend the walking distances by 1/2 a mile for students to be eligible for to-and-from transportation services.

The bill declares an emergency.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill is aimed at saving school districts transportation funds by minimizing the number of

students' districts will have to transport. Extending the walking distances may save money in some school districts; however, it is indeterminate at this time. Without sufficient time to study this proposal, it is not certain how many students school districts will no longer have to transport or how many bus routes may be consolidated or eliminated. In some cases some school districts may not be able to adjust any routes therefore the effects of this bill will be that some school districts will run the same number of buses on the same routes only with less students. In these cases there will be no savings to the school district.

The provisions of this bill will may only affect urban school districts as most students in rural areas still reside outside the new walking distances proposed in this bill.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Current statute for the transportation calculation requires the use of prior year data. If this bill is enacted school districts will potentially transport fewer students. Transportation reports to the Public Education Department on the required reporting dates will also contain fewer students. The enactment of this bill would adversely affect future allocations. This bill could potentially save school districts funding in FY17 and FY18 however, the unintended consequence is lower allocations in the future due to lower ridership in the current years.

SB-170 increases the walking distances for the current school year. This may cause hardship for many parents to have to make alternative transportation arrangements if their children are no longer eligible to ride a school bus. This may be difficult for many parents to do mid-year. Article 12, Section 1 of the New Mexico Constitution requires the state to provide a uniform system of free public schools sufficient for the education that is open to all the children of school age. Changing transportation eligibility requirements mid-year may be perceived as a violation of the constitution by denying a student of a free and public education if parents cannot make alternative transportation arrangements in a short period of time.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

School districts will be required to adjust their school bus routes mid-year. This may be difficult for bigger school districts.

ALTERNATIVES

The legislature may wish to consider extending the walking distance beginning in FY18 so both parents and school districts will have sufficient time to plan for the required changes in the bill.