

Bill to fund legislative session clears House

Written by By Matthew Reichbach NM Political Report
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The House of Representatives wasted no time in passing the bill that pays for the legislative session.

The Feed Bill is annually HB 1, and contains funding for running the legislative session, including salaries for legislative staff.

The bill also pays for interim activities, including interim committees and studies by legislative staff.

The House introduced the Feed Bill shortly after the governor's State of the State Address Jan. 20. The House then sent the bill to the House Appropriations and Finance Committee, which passed the legislation quickly on Tuesday afternoon.

Then the House passed the legislation on a 61-0 Wednesday morning. It now heads to the Senate, where it is expected to pass easily, as it does in most years.

It appropriates over \$5 million to spend money for the session. The budgets were flat for the House and Senate.

The increase total was around 1.3 percent, according to House Majority Leader Nate Gentry, R-Albuquerque. The increases are increased funding for interim expenses, which are for additional studies as well as for the LFC, LESC and for software and hardware updates "to accommodate additional IT functions in the capital" he said.

The bill also includes \$16.5 million in recurring funding.

House Republicans have prided themselves on working faster than Democratic leadership did when Democrats were in power. They have criticized Democrats for wasting time during the

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legislative session and vowed before last year's legislative session to run a tighter ship.

The legislation was the first piece of legislation on which the House used the new voting board, after the aging previous was retired.

However, the first piece of legislation that passed on the new board was actually, of course, a memorial. HM4 "requests the federal Department of Homeland Security support New Mexico's trade with Mexico by increasing infrastructure and extending the hours of operation at the Santa Teresa port of entry to midnight to match the hours of operation at the two El Paso commercial ports of entry" according to the Fiscal Impact Report.

Rep. Bill McCamley, R-Mesilla Park, sponsored the memorial and joked that his face shouldn't be the first one on the new board.

There was a technical glitch, requiring a re-vote on the memorial.

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