



## **PRESS RELEASE: Strong Support for Funding Increases Displayed at Senate Hearing**

April 30 – Today, at the Senate Finance Committee, there was overwhelming unanimous public support for HB 1583, a bill which would increase State funding for education by over \$100 million. Those testifying included citizens, Superintendents, Mayors, School Board Members, and business leaders. Not a single person testified in opposition to the bill. 246 people signed up in support, and only 3 opposed online.

“HB 1583 is one way to start to address the complaints from the *ConVal* lawsuit specifically by increasing base adequacy,” said Zack Sheehan, NHSFFP Executive Director. “But to be clear, this does not solve the problem. There would still be significant differences between school districts, and the changes in this bill do not meet the standard set forth in the *ConVal* decision. But it could be a step in the right direction.”

HB 1583, which was passed by the House 205-177, increases base adequacy from \$4,100 to \$4,404 per pupil and adds \$64 million in targeted aid, divided between fiscal capacity disparity aid, which directs funds to communities with lower property values, and funding for districts with higher proportions of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

Against the backdrop of the two ongoing school funding lawsuits, this bill represents a small step in the right direction, but still falls short of meeting the \$7,356.01 base adequacy floor set in last year’s *ConVal* ruling.

“It’s also important to note that the other ongoing education funding lawsuit, the Rand case, will have a hearing in September. They will be actively arguing that adequacy should be closer to the average per pupil expenditure, which is about \$20,000 per student,” Sheehan said. “This issue is not going away, and it is up to you in the legislature to stop stalling and start delivering education funding and property tax relief.”

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*The mission of the NHSFFP, a registered 501(c)(3), is to inform the public about the condition of New Hampshire public schools and their funding; to advocate for changes to make the system more equitable for students and taxpayers alike; and, if necessary, to prosecute, manage, control, and/or participate in a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the system for funding education in New Hampshire.*