

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

HB 1300 Advances While CACR 12 Fails as Communities Continue Calling for Real Property Tax Solutions

May 15, 2026: Yesterday, the New Hampshire Senate voted to advance HB 1300, a proposal requiring local communities to vote during the November 2026 election on permanent school district tax caps that would remain in effect unless later repealed through a supermajority vote, while the House failed to adopt CACR 12, a proposed constitutional amendment restricting future broad-based taxes, including an income tax. Taken together, yesterday's debates highlighted a growing disconnect between what communities are experiencing and the responses advancing at the State House.

Across New Hampshire, residents are struggling with rising costs and the growing challenge of maintaining the public schools and local services that hold towns and cities together. More and more, local voters are being forced into impossible choices between sustaining the institutions they value and managing mounting economic pressures.

Supporters framed HB 1300 as a property tax relief measure, but communities already have the ability to adopt or reject local tax caps through existing local processes. "People want strong public schools, thriving local institutions, and economic stability for their families," said Zack Sheehan, Executive Director of the New Hampshire School Funding Fairness Project. "But too often, the conversation at the State House treats schools and municipalities as the cause of rising property taxes, instead of honestly grappling with the broader economic pressures and state-level decisions driving those costs. Permanent, state-mandated tax cap frameworks do not address the underlying problem."

"Rising property taxes and affordability pressures do not exist in a vacuum," Sheehan said. "When the State fails to adequately fund its responsibilities, the costs do not disappear. They are too often pushed onto local property taxpayers. Granite Staters should not be forced into a false choice between supporting the schools and services that strengthen their communities and maintaining long-term financial stability."

At the same time, CACR 12 failed to receive the three-fifths support required to advance as a constitutional amendment. Opponents argued the proposal would do little to reduce property taxes or address affordability pressures, underscoring concerns that constitutional constraints are being prioritized over meaningful solutions. "This session, lawmakers had repeated opportunities to seriously engage with the causes of rising property taxes and affordability pressures, and many of those proposals were rejected," Sheehan said. "Meanwhile, proposals like HB 1300 and CACR 12 focus on constraining future choices instead of addressing why communities are under so much pressure in the first place."

New Hampshire continues to rely more heavily on local property taxes to fund public education than any other state in the country. Recent court rulings in both the ConVal and Rand school funding lawsuits reaffirmed that the State is not meeting its constitutional responsibility to adequately fund education and that the explicit result is high property taxes and unfair impacts on students and communities.

"People across New Hampshire are asking for honest conversations about affordability, sustainability, and what it takes to support thriving schools and communities," Sheehan said. "The costs do not disappear simply because the State chooses not to confront them. They continue to fall on local taxpayers, students, and communities every day."

On Background:

- As amended and passed by the Senate, HB 1300 would require every community to vote on a school district tax cap question during the November 2026 election.
- If approved by a 3/5 majority of local voters, the tax cap would take effect beginning with fiscal year 2028 budgets and remain in effect unless later overridden or repealed by another supermajority vote.
- Communities already have the ability under current law to adopt local tax caps through existing local warrant article processes.

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