



# HB 1254 — *SUPPORT* OTP

## *VOTE FOR LOCAL SOLUTIONS*

HOUSE SESSION—THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024

NH Cities and Towns voice strong **SUPPORT** for **HB 1254**, enabling legislation.

- ◆ Inflation, daily or seasonal population growth, tourism and a reduction in emergency service volunteers are putting excessive pressure on town budgets and local residents.
- ◆ This fee is focused on overnight visitors to the area who use town/city tax sponsored services and subsidized resources, but do not pay property taxes.
- ◆ Many NH travel destinations are locations where tourists may outnumber residents –

This small fee will work keep public safety services adequately staffed and funded so impacted towns can remain desirable tourist areas and affordable for local residents.

*A fee is not a tax. Municipalities have the authority to charge a fee for many services under enabling state statutes. Fees are set at an amount which bears a reasonable relationship to the cost of providing the service; therefore, fees do not generate excess revenue, but rather offset direct costs.*

Albany, Conway,  
Portsmouth, Berlin,  
Concord, Claremont,  
Dover, Keene,  
Lebanon, Laconia,  
Lincoln, Ossipee &  
Somersworth

***HB 1254- relative to an optional local public safety assessment on certain room occupancies.***

*Committee Report: NO RECOMMENDATION (Vote 10-10)*

**VOTE**

**HB 1254**

**OTP**



Supports HB 1254. The bill would provide *local* dollars used for *local* costs approved by the *local* legislative body of each municipality that votes to assess this fee.

## HB 1254

# Support the Local Option Public Safety Assessment

February 26, 2024

Dear Representative:

We, the undersigned mayors, urge you to vote Ought to Pass on HB 1254 when it is taken up on the floor in the coming weeks.

From the Seacoast to the White Mountains to the Connecticut River Valley, the State of New Hampshire is a tourism and vacation destination. Although municipalities benefit from our state's strong tourism economy, it also creates a significant strain on local resources and budgets in many communities. Many popular destinations see their seasonal populations swell dramatically each year, increasing demand and changing the way police, fire, and public works services are deployed to keep residents and visitors safe. As it stands today, it is the property taxpayers who must absorb the cost of these increased public safety needs through property taxes.

HB 1254 presents a targeted and well-tailored solution to the increased costs property taxpayers bear to maintain their city or town as an attractive, safe, desirable location to visit. First, the public safety assessment on hotel occupancies must be approved by the legislative body. Second, revenue collected from the public safety assessment is restricted and can only be used to augment funding for the cost of municipal services associated with the increase in tourism and transient traffic, making this bill substantially different from prior, similar legislative proposals.

HB 1254 would allow communities to relieve the burden on local taxpayers while still supporting tourism and their public safety officials. We urge the House of Representatives to pass this important proposal when it comes before you on the floor.

Sincerely,

Mayor Jay Kahn, Keene  
Mayor Timothy McNamara, Lebanon  
Mayor Byron O. Champlin, Concord  
Mayor Dale Girard, Claremont  
Mayor Robert Carrier, Dover  
Mayor Deaglan McEachern, Portsmouth  
Mayor Jim Donchess, Nashua

Mayor Matt Gerding, Somersworth  
Mayor Robert Cone, Berlin  
Mayor Andrew Hosmer, Laconia

Cc:

Senate President Jeb Bradley  
Senator Kevin Avard  
Senator Rebecca Whitley  
Senator Susan Prentiss

House Speaker Sherman Packard  
Majority Leader Jason Osborne  
Minority Leader Matthew Wilhem  
Deputy Democratic Leader Alexis Simpson