

Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee

Jessica Bourque 271-2104

SB 495, increasing the limit for transfers of appropriations in Carroll County.

Hearing Date: January 13, 2026

Time Opened: 10:29 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:36 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gray, Lang, Rochefort, Perkins Kwoka and Long

Members of the Committee Absent: None

Bill Analysis: This bill increases the limit for transfers of appropriations in Carroll County before more formal procedure is required.

Sponsors:

Sen. McConkey

Sen. Gray

Rep. R. Brown

Who supports the bill: Senator McConkey, Harold Parker, Charles McGee

Who opposes the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator Mark McConkey, Prime Sponsor

- For background, they had an issue in 2015. The county found out in 2013 that audits hadn't been conducted since 2009.
- They were informed there was a surplus of over 4.1 million dollars, so after discovering this, they wrote off 1.4 million dollars to assist taxpayers. In 2014, there was a 3.1 million dollar surplus, so again they wrote off more money to help taxpayers. However, in 2014, the delegation identified a \$567,000 deficiency. The deficit then increased to \$907,000. To improve accountability moving forward, they implemented safeguards and limited the county commissioners' line-item authority through legislation, capping it at \$1000.
- The county is now requesting an increase to \$10,000 as a line item.

Senator Long asked whether the July 1st effective date provides sufficient time.

Senator McConkey stated he would respect the committee's opinion.

Senator Gray stated that he supports the bill as written. Before the hearing, while investigating the bill, he asked Kate Horgan from the NH Association of Counties about what other counties were doing and recommended that Senator McConkey speak with Ms. Horgan.

Senator Lang inquired about a way to future-proof future legislatures from having to revisit this issue. He proposed that the number could be a percentage of the overall budget, so that, for example, 10 years from now, it would automatically adjust to that percentage.

Chuck McGee, Carroll County Commission Chair

- Senator McConkey did a good job explaining the history of why Carroll County has these limits.
- The county oversees nursing homes, a correctional facility, water systems, and wastewater systems. \$1000 doesn't go very far when problems arise.
- Asking for some latitude and requested that the committee support the bill.

Senator Gray suggested that Mr. McGee meet with Senator McConkey to review the statute and review what the other counties are doing.

Mr. McGee said the only issue is that commissioners come and go.

Senator Gray said that after Mr. McGee reviews the email and discusses it with Senator McConkey, he will understand what Senator Gray is talking about.