

Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee

Ben Mickens 271-1403

SB 490, establishing a task force to assess the development of housing at Great Bay community college and authorizing the college the right to use vacant property for the purpose of developing housing.

Hearing Date: January 14, 2026

Time Opened: 10:00 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:13 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Reardon, Pearl, McGough and Gannon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Altschiller

Bill Analysis: The bill establishes a task force to study housing feasibility, funding mechanisms, operational models, and resident support systems. This bill also authorizes the development of housing on the Great Bay community college property within the Pease development area, in coordination with relevant state agencies.

Sponsors:

Sen. Watters

Sen. Avard

Sen. Innis

Sen. Lang

Sen. Rosenwald

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Reardon

Sen. Perkins Kwoka

Sen. Pearl

Sen. Gannon

Sen. Prentiss

Sen. Altschiller

Rep. Mandelbaum

Rep. Moffett

Rep. Meuse

Rep. Cornell

Who supports the bill: Senator David Watters, Senator Dan Innis, Senator Howard Pearl, Nick Taylor (Housing Action NH), Paul Braan (Pease Development Authority, Steve Duprey (Pease Development Authority)

Who opposes the bill: Daniel Richardson

Who is neutral on the bill: Adjunct General David Mikolaities, Chuck Lloyd (CCSNH)

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator David Watters

- This legislation would establish a task force to assess development of housing at Great Bay community college
- There is an amendment offered. It adds one duty to the task force which should have been in the original.
- I would reiterate the concerns all of us have about housing in and around Pease Air Force Base and our service-members who serve there.
- Could we help address their needs by doing a joint project with Great Bay Community College? There is precedent with other campuses. The need is there, we want to look into what is possible. There is a possibility here through creative partnership to help support our military and college communities.
- There has been a historical interest in this, but it has not taken off the ground yet.
- To the amendment, it asks the task force to review permissibility relevant to governing federal authorities as well (E.g. DOT or FAA).
- The task force will also look at topics like ownership leasing models, federal funding, maintenance, staffing, and so on.
- After the task force report, we will come back to the legislative process and decide what we want to do.

Nick Taylor, Director (Housing Action NH)

- Housing remains a huge challenge across the state.
- To afford the median sales price of a house, the household income needs to be around 182 thousand.
 - To afford median 2-bedroom rent, one would need to make \$35 an hour.
- We are in full support of the bill, it could relieve pressure in the Seacoast housing market.

Steve Duprey, Chair (Pease Development Authority)

- Why is it so difficult to do housing? This was the first base closure done under the BRAC commission.
- 100% of revenue generated must stay on property to sustain airport. Any surplus goes into a capital account.
- We love exploring this possibility. If I could wave a magic wand, I'd allow for even more housing. We want to find a way to address this.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None.

Neutral Information Presented:

Major General David Mikolaities, Adjutant General (NH National Guard)

- The Air National Guard is based out of Pease Air National Guard Base. It is the only Air Guard refueling wing in the country that works with a KC 46 refueler.

- Since this is so unique, we have active-duty members who come through for 3-4 year stints because of their expertise.
- Since the base isn't meant for full-time living, the active-duty members are put onto the housing market. They do not end up living near Pease and get pushed out to towns further and further away.
- We are interested in looking at anything and everything to help our service members afford housing. We have an existing partnership with our state's community college and university systems.

Chuck Lloyd, Vice Chancellor (Community College Systems)

- We have an existing model across the state for a number of housing programs.
- We have a wide range of opportunities which draw students away from home.
- We are happy to be involved with the task force, housing is an issue for our students.

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Date Hearing Report completed: January 19, 2026