

# Senate Commerce Committee

*Aaron Jones 271-2609*

**HB 1588-FN**, establishing special assessment districts and expands the housing infrastructure grant program to allow for municipal upgrades linked to new housing and making an appropriation therefor.

**Hearing Date:** March 31, 2026

**Time Opened:** 10:31 a.m.

**Time Closed:** 10:36 a.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Innis, Ricciardi, Murphy, McGough, Fenton and Reardon

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill establishes special assessment districts and expands the housing infrastructure grant program to allow for municipal upgrades linked to new housing.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Sweeney

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**Who supports the bill:** Representative Joe Alexander, Nick Taylor (Housing Action NH), Jack Ruderman (NH Housing), Phillip Jasak (NH Home Builders Association)

**Who opposes the bill:** No one

**Who is neutral on the bill:** No one

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

***Representative Joe Alexander***

- This bill would provide municipalities with a new local financing tool to pay for infrastructure. Cities and towns would be able to create special assessment districts to ensure properties who receive benefits from these improvements help to cover the cost.
- This bill also would help to build a funding stream for infrastructure by transferring proceeds from state land sales to BEA for infrastructure grants and investments. This bill allowed for the establishment of a fund through a \$1 appropriation.
- Eligible infrastructure projects would be tied to development, including roads, sidewalks, lighting, traffic control devices, water mains, and sewer lines.

- Assessments would only be levied on properties receiving a direct benefit.
- The cost of public infrastructure has been a barrier to housing and redevelopment.
- Representative Alexander said this bill was not a statewide mandate, a tax increase, a blank check, or the same as TIF districts.
- Representative Alexander said this bill was about making growth possible in the first place.
- Municipalities could adopt districts by a two-thirds vote of the governing body and a majority vote of the legislative body. Representative Alexander said a two-thirds vote protected against abuse.
- Representative Alexander said this bill provided a practical local option, which gave municipalities a fair and targeted way to finance improvements to help unlock development.

***Nick Taylor, Director, Housing Action NH***

- Infrastructure challenges are a barrier to building more housing.
- New Hampshire Zoning Atlas found that 5.6 percent of all buildable land has access to water and sewer infrastructure, and about 12 percent has access to just water or sewer.
- Mr. Taylor said RSA 52-A already allowed for the establishment of special assessment districts; however, it was not specific to water and sewer infrastructure. In addition, the initiation process started with a petition base whereas this bill started with the governing body.
- Mr. Taylor encouraged the Committee to ensure both statutes worked together to avoid potential confusion among municipalities on whether to use RSA 52-A or RSA 162-V.

**Summary of testimony presented in opposition:** None

**Neutral Information Presented:** None