

Senate Commerce Committee

Aaron Jones 271-2609

HB 1726-FN, relative to the sale of surplus state-owned land.

Hearing Date: April 14, 2026

Time Opened: 9:31 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:36 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Birdsell, Murphy, Fenton and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senators Innis and Ricciardi

Bill Analysis: This bill requires that proceeds from the sale or lease of surplus state-owned land be credited to the originating department's fund.

This bill also establishes a commission to study the sale of state-owned property.

Sponsors:

Rep. Muns

Rep. Booras

Rep. de Vries

Rep. Hegner

Rep. Howland

Rep. Lane

Rep. Maggiore

Rep. D. Paige

Rep. Read

Rep. Stavis

Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Perkins Kwoka

Who supports the bill: Representative Brian Cole, Cory Stone

Who opposes the bill: Julie Smith, Chase Eagleson (NH Council on Developmental Disabilities), Daniel Richardson

Who is neutral on the bill: Nick Taylor (Housing Action NH)

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Representative Brian Cole

- The Department of Transportation has over 700 parcels of land next to highways and off-ramps on their books.
- Representative Cole said this bill would allow the Department to sell parcels to whoever would like to buy them.
- If land is off an exit ramp, it could be developed into a gas station or a convenience store. If land is in a nice area, Representative Cole said a developer could buy it.
- Some parcels of land are over 100 acres.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

Neutral Information Presented:

Nick Taylor, Director, Housing Action NH

- The Governor’s Commission on Government Efficiency looked at state-owned land and residential development. At a recent conference, Mr. Taylor said Governor Ayotte discussed creative solutions around leasing land for housing development.
- Mr. Taylor supported the concept of using underutilized land for residential development.
- Land costs are a significant driver of housing costs, so Mr. Taylor said anything they could do to minimize those costs was worth exploring.
- While some of the land owned by the Department of Transportation abutted highways, some had high value and potential.
- **Senator Reardon** asked if it was his understanding that the Department had a book of surplus land, but there was more than that.
 - **Mr. Taylor** said it was his understanding that other departments owned land around the state.
- **Senator Reardon** asked who had the authority to negotiate and sell the land.
 - **Mr. Taylor** said having each department make land transactions was not feasible; instead, it would be better if one entity like the Department of Administrative Services was responsible for it.