

HB 1220 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2937

07/05

HOUSE BILL **1220**

AN ACT allowing the governing bodies of municipalities, cities, and towns to review and approve school budgets.

SPONSORS: Rep. Hemingway, Sull. 6

COMMITTEE: Municipal and County Government

ANALYSIS

This bill allowing residents of school districts to vote to adopt a procedure allowing city councils, or a similar governing body, to approve school district budgets.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT allowing the governing bodies of municipalities, cities, and towns to review and approve school budgets.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Paragraphs; Education; School Administrative Units; Alternative Budget Procedure;
2 Method of Adoption. Amend RSA 194-C:9-a by inserting after paragraph VI the following new
3 paragraphs:

4 VII.(a) Each school district may vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 194-C:9-b, V, to
5 determine the means for granting their local city council or similar governing body the authority to
6 review and control voting authority to approve the school budget by placing a question on the
7 warrant of their next annual school district meeting. The question shall be voted on in accordance
8 with the ballot and voting procedures in effect in that school district.

9 (b) The wording of the question shall be: "Shall the voters of the _____ school
10 district adopt the provisions of RSA 194-C:9-b, V, to allow for the local city council, or similar
11 governing body, the authority to review and control voting authority to approve the school budget?"

12 (c) If a majority of the voters voting in the school district approve the question, then RSA
13 194-C:9-b, V, shall apply starting with the next annual school district meeting of the school district,
14 and shall continue until rescinded. Each school district moderator shall cause a vote by secret ballot
15 to be taken, record the number of yeas and nays, and announce the result of the vote at the annual
16 meeting. The ballots shall be delivered to the moderator of the school district with the latest
17 chronological annual meeting. The moderator of the latest chronological annual meeting shall record
18 the total number of yeas and nays, announce the results of the final vote, and deliver the ballots to
19 the secretary of the local school administrative unit. The secretary of the school administrative unit
20 board shall certify the results to the department of revenue administration.

21 VIII. If, in any year, the question presented to the voters in subparagraph VII(b) is not
22 adopted, the question may be resubmitted as part of the warrant of the next annual school district
23 meeting, provided each school district complies with the petition procedure set forth in RSA 197:6.

24 IX. In order to rescind the adoption of RSA 194-C:9-b, V, each school district shall comply
25 with the petition procedure set forth in RSA 197:6 and upon such compliance, a question shall be
26 placed on the warrant of the next annual school district meeting. The wording of the question shall
27 be: "Shall the voters of the _____ school district rescind the adoption of RSA 194-C:9-b, V,
28 relative to the alternative school budget approval procedure, and adopt the provisions of RSA 194-
29 C:9, as the method for governing the approval of the school budget?" If a majority of the voters
30 voting in the school district approve the question, then the provisions of RSA 194-C:9 shall govern

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1 the procedure for approving the school budget in such school district. Each school district moderator
2 shall cause a secret ballot vote to be taken, record the number of yeas and nays, and announce the
3 result of the vote at the annual meeting. The ballots shall be delivered to the moderator of the
4 school district with the latest chronological annual meeting. The moderator of the latest
5 chronological annual meeting shall record the total number of yeas and nays, announce the results of
6 the final vote on the question of adopting the school budget adoption method, and deliver the ballots
7 to the secretary of the school administrative unit. The secretary of the school administrative unit
8 board shall certify the results to the department of revenue administration.

9 X. After a vote to adopt or rescind the alternative school budget procedure, the secretary of
10 the school administrative unit shall place the ballots and all envelopes or wrapping which had
11 previously contained them in a suitable container showing the contents and the date of the vote. The
12 ballots shall be retained for 60 days from the date of the vote or any recount, unless further
13 preservation is necessary or unless disposal is enjoined by the superior court.

14 XI. Any registered voter who resides in a school district may, in writing, petition the
15 secretary of the school administrative unit for a recount of the vote taken no later than the Friday
16 following the latest chronological annual meeting of the school district. The secretary shall schedule
17 a recount, to be conducted by the school administrative unit, not earlier than 5 days nor later than
18 10 days after the date the secretary receives the petition.

19 XII. For any town which has adopted a charter under RSA 49-D:3, the method of adoption
20 shall be the manner of amending the charter as provided under RSA 49-B.

21 2 New Paragraph; Education; School Administrative Units; Alternative Budget Procedure.
22 Amend RSA 194-C:9-b by inserting after paragraph IV the following new paragraphs:

23 V. In a school district which has adopted the provisions of RSA 194-C:9-a, VII, the school
24 budget adopted according to RSA 194-C:9, I shall be placed before the voters of each school district of
25 that school district in a separate warrant article at the annual school district meeting.
26 Notwithstanding RSA 32 and RSA 40:13, the budget adopted by the school district shall not be
27 amended or changed in any way prior to the vote. Each school district moderator shall cause a vote
28 by paper ballot to be taken, record the number of yeas and nays, and announce the result of the vote
29 at the annual meeting. The ballots shall be delivered to the moderator of the school district with the
30 latest chronological annual meeting. The moderator of the latest chronological annual meeting shall
31 record the total number of yeas and nays, announce the results of the final vote on the question of
32 adopting the school budget, and deliver the ballots to the secretary of the school administrative unit.
33 The secretary of the school administrative unit board shall certify the results to the department of
34 revenue administration. A majority of voters voting in favor shall result in adoption of the budget
35 proposed by the school district. If the article receives less than a majority vote, the budget amount
36 accepted shall be that of the previous year adjusted for continuing contracts. Wording of the
37 warrant article shall be as follows:

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1 "Shall the voters of _____ (name of school district) adopt a school budget of \$ ____ for the
2 forthcoming fiscal year, in which \$ ____ is assigned to the school budget of this school district, to be
3 approved by the local city council or similar governing body?

4 This year's adjusted budget of \$ _____ , with \$ _____ assigned to the school budget of this school
5 district, will be adopted if the article does not receive a majority vote of all the school district voters
6 voting in this school district."

7 VI. After a vote on the school budget, the secretary of the school administrative unit shall
8 place the ballots and all envelopes or wrapping which had previously contained them in a suitable
9 container showing the contents and the date of the vote. The ballots shall be retained for 60 days
10 from the date of the vote or any recount, unless further preservation is necessary or unless disposal
11 is enjoined by the superior court.

12 VII. Any registered voter who resides in a school district may, in writing, petition the
13 secretary of the school administrative unit for a recount of the vote no later than the Friday
14 following the latest chronological annual meeting of school districts. The secretary shall schedule a
15 recount, to be conducted by the school administrative unit, not earlier than 5 days nor later than 10
16 days after the date the secretary receives the petition.

17 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.