

HB 1473-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2979

08/07

HOUSE BILL            ***1473-FN***

AN ACT                relative to the use of agricultural fairground property.

SPONSORS:            Rep. Granger, Straf. 2; Rep. Labrie, Hills. 2; Rep. C. McGuire, Merr. 27; Rep. Korzen, Coos 7; Rep. Farrington, Straf. 8; Rep. Tom Mannion, Hills. 1; Rep. Polozov, Merr. 10

COMMITTEE:          Municipal and County Government

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ANALYSIS

This bill limits the ability of local governments in New Hampshire to impose zoning restrictions on land used for agricultural fairs.

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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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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 relative to the use of agricultural fairground property.

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

1 1 New Paragraph; Zoning; Grant of Power; Agricultural Fairs. Amend RSA 674:16 by inserting  
2 after paragraph IV the following new paragraph:

3 IV-a. No city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or  
4 unorganized places shall adopt or amend a zoning ordinance or regulation with respect to land or  
5 structures dedicated in whole or in part to periodic operation of an agricultural fair, provided that  
6 such land or structures are owned by a corporation whose purpose is to promote agricultural and  
7 mechanical skills, and the use of said land and structures is in furtherance of such corporation's  
8 purpose.

9 2 Planning and Zoning; Agricultural Fairs; Declaration of Purpose. Amend RSA 672:1, III-b to  
10 read as follows:

11 III-b. Agriculture **and agricultural fairs** [~~makes~~] **make** vital and significant contributions  
12 to the food supply, the economy, the environment and the aesthetic features of the state of New  
13 Hampshire, and the tradition of using the land resource for agricultural production is an essential  
14 factor in providing for the favorable quality of life in the state. Natural features, terrain and the  
15 pattern of geography of the state frequently place agricultural land in close proximity to other forms  
16 of development and commonly in small parcels. Agricultural activities **and agricultural fairs** are  
17 a beneficial and worthwhile feature of the New Hampshire landscape. Agritourism, as defined in  
18 RSA 21:34-a, is undertaken by farmers to contribute to both the economic viability and the long-term  
19 sustainability of the primary agricultural activities of New Hampshire farms. Agricultural  
20 activities, **agricultural fairgrounds**, and agritourism shall not be unreasonably limited by use of  
21 municipal planning and zoning powers or by the unreasonable interpretation of such powers;

22 3 Planning and Zoning; Agricultural Fairs; Declaration of Purpose. Amend RSA 672:1, III-d to  
23 read as follows:

24 III-d. For purposes of paragraphs III-a, III-b, III-c, and III-e, "unreasonable interpretation"  
25 includes the failure of local land use authorities to recognize that agriculture, **agricultural**  
26 **fairground property**, and agritourism operations or activities as defined in RSA 21:34-a, forestry,  
27 renewable energy systems, and commercial and recreational fisheries, when practiced in accordance  
28 with applicable laws and regulations, are traditional, fundamental and accessory uses of land  
29 throughout New Hampshire, and that a prohibition upon these uses cannot necessarily be inferred  
30 from the failure of an ordinance or regulation to address them;

31 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**HB 1473-FN- FISCAL NOTE  
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to the use of agricultural fairground property.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

<b>Estimated Political Subdivision Impact</b>				
	<b>FY 2026</b>	<b>FY 2027</b>	<b>FY 2028</b>	<b>FY 2029</b>
<b>Local Revenue</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Local Expenditures</b>	\$0	Indeterminable Increase less than \$10,000 per municipality		

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill restricts local governments from imposing zoning restrictions on land used for agricultural fairs.

The New Hampshire Municipal Association states the bill could lead to indeterminable local expenditures estimated at less than \$10,000 per municipality. Municipalities with qualifying fairgrounds may face legal costs from disputes over whether new uses align with the corporation's purpose. Additionally, there may be minor costs for updating zoning ordinances.

The New Hampshire Association of Counties states there will be no impact on county governments.

It is assumed that any fiscal impact would occur after FY 2026.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

New Hampshire Municipal Association and New Hampshire Association of Counties