

HB 1664-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2977
07/08

HOUSE BILL ***1664-FN***

AN ACT directing the department of natural and cultural resources to remove the Hannah Duston Memorial in Boscawen.

SPONSORS: Rep. Nagel, Belk. 6; Rep. Damon, Sull. 8; Rep. Grote, Rock. 24; Rep. Hartnett, Hills. 41; Rep. Horrigan, Straf. 10; Rep. Read, Rock. 10; Rep. W. Thomas, Hills. 12; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13; Sen. Watters, Dist 4

COMMITTEE: Resources, Recreation and Development

ANALYSIS

This bill directs the department of natural and cultural resources to remove the Hannah Duston Memorial in Boscawen.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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 directing the department of natural and cultural resources to remove the Hannah Duston Memorial in Boscawen.

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

1 1 Statement of Findings. The general court hereby finds that:

2 I. New Hampshire is rich in Native American history and values the contributions of the
3 Native American population to the state.

4 II. The unfortunate legacy of government-sanctioned harm to the Native American
5 population through forced assimilation, culturicide, and genocide, first under colonial government,
6 and later under federal and state government control, resulted in the dramatic decimation of the
7 Native American population in New Hampshire.

8 III. To the extent any or all of the legend of Hannah Duston is true, she was a victim of a
9 complex and divisive interaction between European settlers and the Native Population, much to the
10 detriment of the latter, which resulted in the attempt of local natives to “live free or die” through
11 various conflicts, such as King Philip’s War and King William's War, in what proved to be a futile
12 attempt to maintain their sense of cultural integrity and independence.

13 IV. The Native American part of this nation's story is not shared at the memorial site, the
14 marker, or the historic site website, and the presence of the monument provides a gross distortion of
15 historic events that causes further harm to New Hampshire's Native American population.

16 V. Hannah Duston’s story, lost for nearly 200 years, was memorialized in 1870 to use her
17 alleged action of murdering and scalping 2 adult men, 2 adult women, and 6 child natives to inspire
18 non-native citizens to solve the “Native American problem” through similar actions of violence
19 through government-sanctioned forced assimilation, native culturicide, and genocide, practices
20 which continued in this country until 1955.

21 VI. The state memorial glorifies the practice of scalp bounties, sanctioned by federal, state,
22 and territorial governments, which continued until the late 1800’s and resulted in the decimation of
23 native populations all over the country. According to the legend, in escaping her captors, Hannah
24 Dustin murdered ten natives including 6 children, and then scalped them, for which she was paid
25 the scalp bounty, a practice which represents a sad legacy that our state is not proud of.

26 VII. The state, as a people, should not and cannot glorify such actions by statutory
27 memorialization.

28 2 Department of Natural and Cultural Resources; Directive. The department of natural and
29 cultural resources shall remove the Hannah Duston Memorial and the historic marker from their
30 sites in Boscawen. The memorial and marker may be destroyed or stored by the department. If the

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1 department elects to store the memorial and marker, and, at any point in time, seeks to display
2 them, the memorial and marker shall be displayed in an accurate and objective manner which
3 depicts the history and respects the legacy of all the participants involved.

4 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**HB 1664-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT directing the department of natural and cultural resources to remove the Hannah Duston Memorial in Boscawen.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	None			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable Increase \$30,000 to \$200,000	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund and Various Agency Funds			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

METHODOLOGY:

This bill directs the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to remove the Hannah Duston Memorial and the associated historic marker in Boscawen. The bill authorizes the Department to either destroy or store the memorial and marker, and permits display at a later date if done in an accurate and objective manner that respects all participants.

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources states this bill will result in an indeterminable increase in state expenditures in FY 2027. The Department interprets the legislation to allow compliance either through full removal of the memorial and marker or by maintaining them onsite with additional interpretive information that provides accurate historical context. Based on this interpretation, the Department estimates that adding interpretive materials could cost approximately \$30,000 to \$50,000. If the Department elects instead to remove the memorial and marker, costs would be substantially higher, with a likely range of \$50,000 to \$200,000. The cost of removal is highly dependent on engineering limitations associated with the pedestrian bridge accessing the island where the memorial is located. If heavy equipment such as cranes or flatbed transport trucks cannot access the site without bridge improvements, expenditures could increase significantly.

The bill does not provide funding for these activities and the Department states they may be able to fund the expenditures through the following accounts: Capital Funds, Conservation Number Plate Fund, General Fund and State Park Fund.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Natural and Cultural Resources