

Senate Commerce Committee

Aaron Jones 271-2609

HB 399, establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act.

Hearing Date: March 4, 2025

Time Opened: 11:45 a.m.

Time Closed: 11:49 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:

I. Establishes a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act.

II. Changes the effective date of 2025; 1 (SB 4), relative to the C-PACER program, from January 1, 2026 to upon passage.

III. Modifies the definition of "municipality" in the energy efficiency and clean energy districts chapter.

Sponsors:

Rep. Alexander Jr.

Rep. Osborne

Rep. Simpson

Rep. Sweeney

Sen. McConkey

Sen. Murphy

Sen. Reardon

Who supports the bill: Representative Joe Alexander, Natch Greyes (BIA), Jack Ruderman (NH Housing), Nick Taylor (Housing Action NH), Alex Koutroubas (AGC-NH), Chris Norwood (NH Realtors), Peggy Gilmour (Nashua Chamber of Commerce), Dawn McKinney (NH Legal Assistance), Greg Moore (AFP-NH), Janet Lucas

Who opposes the bill: Daniel Richardson, Deb Roux, Dan Roux

Who is neutral on the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Representative Joe Alexander

- This bill would establish a commission to study the Zoning Enabling Act, which just turned 100 years old.

- Representative Alexander said the Legislature should revisit the powers they have given to municipalities.
- Representative Alexander said he was open to feedback on the questions listed on Page 2.
- Representative Alexander requested the membership be reconfigured to give the appointing authority to the speaker in consultation with the majority and minority leaders.
 - **Senator Innis** said Amendment 25-0698s would address this particular concern.
- **Senator Ricciardi** said they have been asked to not do as many commissions because there will not be enough meeting space.
 - **Representative Alexander** said the House has made that a priority as well; however, he believed this was an important one to move forward.

Greg Moore, Regional Director, Americans for Prosperity – New Hampshire

- Mr. Moore said 100 years was enough time to review and determine if this legislation has been working effectively. Given the number of bills filed on this topic, it also would indicate a comprehensive review of the entire process was timely and deserved.
- Some of the changes made in the House ensured this was a bipartisan bill.
- Mr. Moore was concerned that nonmembers were added to the Commission on Page 1, Lines 21, 23, and 25. When people are appointed jointly, he asked what would happen if the senate president and the minority leader disagreed.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

Neutral Information Presented: None