

# Senate Transportation Committee

*Vivian Hall 271-3091*

**SB 458-FN**, relative to the use of toll credits.

**Hearing Date:** January 20, 2026

**Time Opened:** 2:07 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 2:36 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Ricciardi, McConkey, Ward, Prentiss and Fenton

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill:

I. Removes the Nashua-Manchester-Concord project limitation.

II. Allows municipal, county, and non-profit projects to purchase toll credits at a discount of at least 50 percent of face value.

III. Eliminates the need for departmental or legislative approval for their use.

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**Sponsors:**

Sen. Reardon  
Sen. Prentiss  
Sen. Fenton

Sen. Long  
Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Watters  
Sen. Perkins Kwoka

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**Who supports the bill:** Senator Tara Reardon, Senate District 15; Brodie Deshaies, Legislative Advocate, New Hampshire Municipal Association; and Dick Lemieux.

**Who opposes the bill:** None.

**Who is neutral on the bill:** Danielle Chandonnet, New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

**Senator Reardon, Senate District 15**

- Senator Reardon introduced SB 458-FN to extend the use of toll credits beyond highway projects to eligible municipal, county, and nonprofit projects.
- The Department of Transportation said that current federal regulations may prevent toll credit transfers and cited the failure of a former federal pilot program but declined to provide a definitive legal opinion when asked.

- She said the Federal Highway Administration materials include plenty of examples of toll credits used in public-private partnerships that suggest that federal law does allow such use under certain conditions.
- This bill would support in-state projects like the Merrimack Greenway Trail, advancing transportation, tourism, and economic activity while respecting any applicable federal limitations.

**Senator Ricciardi** asked if this bill would be counterproductive to SB 627-FN.

**Senator Reardon** said there is not one single fix. This is one way of promoting the construction needed. One form of funding doesn't replace the other and we need them all.

### **Dick Lemieux**

- Mr. Lemieux said that the municipalities and nonprofits across the state would benefit from this bill being passed.
- SB458 would address a structural problem in the way New Hampshire handles federal funding for some transportation projects.
- He explained that federal law broadly allows toll credits, but RSA 228 adds process without judgment, effectively excluding municipalities and disproportionately harming urban, transit, nonprofit, and compact-area projects.
- Mr. Lemieux said that SB 458 would fix the issues associated with RSA 228.

**Senator Ricciardi** expressed that these types of bills always fail citing concerns that passing this bill before broader toll credit reforms could fail due to insufficient credits.

**Mr. Lemieux** responded that New Hampshire recently had excess toll credits but now faces shortages likely due to reduced toll system spending.

### **Neutral Information Presented:**

#### **Danielle Chandonnet, Department of Transportation**

- Ms. Chandonnet explained what the toll credits are, how they are earned, how they are spent, and what they can be spent on.
- Ms. Chandonnet expressed concern that under the current plan, turnpike toll credits would be exhausted by 2035.

**Senator McConkey** asked if it would be a fair assessment that toll credits should not be used for projects and instead, available funds should be reserved solely for the department. Ms. Chandonnet agreed.