Senate Finance Committee

Deb Martone 271-4980

SB 419-FN-A, relative to the housing champion designation and program and the affordable housing fund, and making appropriations therefor.

Hearing Date: January 20, 2026

Time Opened: 1:50 p.m. **Time Closed**: 1:57 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gray, Innis, Birdsell, Pearl, Lang, Rosenwald and Watters

Members of the Committee Absent: Senator Carson

Bill Analysis: This bill:

I. Expands the qualifications to receive a housing champion designation to include the adoption of land use regulations and ordinances that promote child care near jobs with the building of child care centers closer to commercial areas.

II. Makes appropriations to the housing champion designation and grant program fund and the affordable housing fund.

Sponsors:

Sen. Perkins Kwoka	Sen. Watters	Sen. Fenton
Sen. Rosenwald	Sen. Altschiller	Rep. Muns
Rep. D. Paige	Rep. Simpson	Rep. Stavis
Rep. Telerski		

Who supports the bill: Please see Senate Finance Committee Legislative Aide, Deb Martone, for a complete list of individuals supporting SB 419-FN-A.

Who opposes the bill: Jayne Alexander; Daniel Richardson;

Summary of testimony presented in support:

<u>Senator Perkins Kwoka, Prime Sponsor:</u>

- Senate Bill 419-FN-A, the Afford Your Home Act, would expand the qualifications to receive a Housing Champion designation to include the adoption of land use regulations and ordinances that promote child care near jobs, with the building of child care centers close to commercial areas. The bill would also make a $5 million appropriation to the Housing Champion Fund and a $10 million appropriation to the Housing Finance Authority for deposit into the Affordable Housing Fund. Both appropriations would be non-lapsing.

- Housing and child care are two of the most important issues facing our state. It is simple. In order to grow our state, we need young families to stay here. When young families are choosing a place to live, they consider job opportunities, where they are going to live, and how their children will be taken care of while they work. To be competitive with our neighboring states, we must invest in affordable housing and drive the cost of child care down. This means state investment in both new housing development and expanding child care options across the state. SB 419-FN-A would encourage the development of both.
- New Hampshire businesses lose an estimated $56 million annually due to a lack of available child care license slots. This lack of child care means that parents who would normally be driving our economy are instead struggling to find someone to care for their kids or drive their kids to school.
- According to the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute, state and local tax revenues may have been reduced by $9-$14 million due to inadequate child care availability, which would also help our municipalities.
- Housing Champion is a proven solution that invests in water and sewer infrastructure, something members of this committee have supported in the past. Two rounds of 28 grants across the state have resulted in many new housing starts.
- SB 419-FN-A is another step toward investing in our state's future. By investing now, future generations will receive the benefits.
- Invest in child care, housing supply, and in young New Hampshire families.

<u>Joanie McIntire, Vice-Chair, Public Policy, New Hampshire Association of Realtors:</u>

- Something Ms. McIntire has heard in the housing industry recently is "Action before progress, progress before results." Both the Affordable Housing Fund and Housing Champions have shown good progress in providing housing for workers, seniors, and young families.
- Municipalities have increased their housing supply. They're excited to share how they've done that.
- They talk about lots of numbers in real estate. For example, housing costs have increased 120 percent in the last decade. Certainly, wages have not kept up with that.
- The only real solution is to build more new houses, including single family homes, manufactured homes, town houses and apartments. We need all of them. That will be where we see some real affordability. Increased supplies will help with affordability. Less housing is going to mean slower job growth and increased shelter costs.
- If the state and federal government does not provide resources to allow for below market rentals, then this sort of housing will simply not be built.
- In short, we need more houses to help stabilize prices. All types of houses are needed at all price points.
- More owners mean stronger communities. Our economy will be stronger and continue to grow if employers aren't feeling the constraint of hiring due to the lack of housing.

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Date Hearing Report completed: January 24, 2026