

# Senate Finance Committee

*Deb Martone 271-4980*

**HB 122-FN**, relative to payment of claims arising out of actions or activities of the New Hampshire national guard.

**Hearing Date:** April 1, 2025

**Time Opened:** 1:16 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 1:21 p.m.

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

**Members of the Committee Absent:** Senators Innis, Carson and Lang

**Bill Analysis:** This bill increases the maximum payment for claims arising out of actions or activities of the New Hampshire national guard from \$500 to \$1000. The bill also permits such payments for claims against the department of military affairs and veterans services.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Creighton

Rep. J. Aron

Rep. Bixby

Rep. A. Davis

Rep. T. Dolan

Rep. Edwards

Rep. N. Germana

Rep. Moffett

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Innis

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**Who supports the bill:** Representative Creighton; Kevin Grady; Janet Lucas.

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

Representative Creighton, Hillsborough District 30, Prime Sponsor:

- HB 122-FN was introduced at the request of the National Guard.
- The bill would authorize the Guard to reimburse individuals if National Guard troops or vehicles caused damages, e.g., if a truck hit a mailbox. Under the current law, the National Guard can reimburse up to \$500 for damages. This has not been updated in over 25 years, and much of the damage now exceeds that amount.
- The National Guard is asking for the reimbursement limit to be increased to \$1,000 per incident instead of \$500.
- Rep. Creighton can attest that accidents like these do happen, and it's best to handle the reimbursement directly to resolve the issue efficiently.
- Senator Rosenwald asked if the appropriation for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is from the General Fund or federal funds. Rep. Creighton replied it is from the General Fund.

- Senator Gray asked if Rep. Creighton had any idea how many of these claims are to be expected. Rep. Creighton said the number is very few, less than 100.

Kevin Grady, State Veterans Advisory Committee:

- The State Veterans Advisory Committee supports the bill.
- Small changes in the bill include updating the language changing "Department of the Adjutant General" to "Department of Military Affairs and Veteran Services" to reflect recent changes.
- This bill hasn't been updated in a long time. The statute was created in August 1981.
- Costs have increased since 1981, and this bill is a good deal for both the National Guard and the public, as it simplifies the process and avoids the need for a lengthy claims process for damages under \$1,000.
- Senator Birdsell asked if this was a request. Mr. Grady answered yes and said that the request for HB 122-FN came from General Mikolaities' Office, and General Mikolaities testified in favor when the bill was presented before the House.

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 2, 2025