

Senate Commerce Committee

Aaron Jones 271-2609

HB 382, relative to authority for municipalities to regulate mandatory on-site parking requirements.

Hearing Date: April 15, 2025

Time Opened: 10:28 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:42 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Innis, Ricciardi, McGough, Fenton and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Murphy

Bill Analysis: This bill amends the amount of accessory parking that municipalities can require for residential units.

Sponsors:

Rep. Sweeney

Rep. Alexander Jr.

Rep. Berry

Rep. Grill

Rep. A. Murray

Rep. Osborne

Who supports the bill: Greg Moore (AFP-NH), Nick Taylor (Housing Action NH), Michelle Elder (Ford Motor Company), Curtis Howland, James Gardner, Sayre Moskwa, Anne Marie Skinner, Jason Sorens, Sandra Bravo, Aubrey Freedman

Who opposes the bill: Representative Tom Schamberg, Representative Steven Bogert, Patricia Bridgeo, Dawn Merryman, Margaret Byrnes (NHMA), Sarahlynn Williams, Carol Schutte, Rachel Webb, Lisa Haagen, Catherine Tarnowski, Roger Murray, Sharon Monahan, Roy Schweiker, Leah Van Ryen, Todd Selig (Town of Durham), Stephen MacLeod, Jo Beth Dudley (Dalton Select Board), Helen Lloyd-Davies, Maura Annette Chappelle, Loretta Laurenitis

Who is neutral on the bill: Michael Moranti (NH Banking Department), Lea Sabeau (NH Banking Department)

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Senator Tim McGough, on behalf of Representative Joe Sweeney

- This bill is relative to the authority for municipalities to regulate mandatory on-site parking requirements.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition:

Patricia Bridgeo

- One space per unit limits the ability of individuals to interact with others in their community, get to their job, or have individuals come over.
- In their town, Ms. Bridgeo said they did not have Uber and most individuals had 2 cars at a minimum.

Margaret Byrnes, New Hampshire Municipal Association

- This bill would conflict with SB 284, which was passed by the Senate.
- This bill would limit reasonable local decision-making that is used to ensure municipalities have adequate parking for residents, visitors, and their workforce. It also leads to issues related to traffic management, health, safety, and snow removal.
- This bill could lead to more law enforcement presence over parking disputes.
- In New Hampshire, most regulations require 1 to 2 parking spaces. Ms. Byrnes said an average of 1.5 spaces, which is in existing law, was reasonable.
- RSA 674:16 was amended last year, and it became effective in January 2025. Ms. Byrnes said they have not had a full year to see how restricting municipalities has affected local decision-making, communities, and residents.
- In some parts of the country, there are fewer individuals who have cars or drive; however, there are limited walkable communities in New Hampshire. New Hampshire Employment Security found that 81 percent of residents drive to work every day. Over the past decade, there has been a 10 percent increase in drivers. Nationally, New Hampshire ranks 10th in vehicles per capita.
- Since the current law was sufficient for regulating parking at the local level, Ms. Byrnes asked the Committee to vote Inexpedient to Legislate.

Representative Steven Bogert

- Existing law allows a one-bedroom apartment to have at least 2 parking spaces.
- As a city councilor, Representative Bogert has seen neighborhoods where there is inadequate parking, and individuals have been forced to park on the street.
- In older towns, there are narrower streets.
- Feuds between neighbors happen, especially if driveways are blocked.
- Representative Bogert said it took 3 weeks for them to solve an issue related to parking because they had a home that was developed into 3 or 4 apartments.
- To address these issues, they could make streets one way or they could have no parking on one side, which would further exacerbate the issue.
- As more development is created, parking problems are created.
- Representative Bogert said it needed to be kept at 1.5 spaces because it was a responsible change.

- While there needed to be more housing, Representative Bogert said they needed to be more responsible for how it was set up.
- If the Committee went to 1 space, Representative Bogert asked them to think about new development. If there is existing development, it will create problems. If it is a new subdivision, however, they can carve out community and on-site parking at the planning level.

Dawn Merryman

- In her town, they have situations where individuals have no choice but to take something that does not fit their requirements.
- One parking space could be required, and individuals could park on public streets or in access ways, which would endanger the public.
- In her town, they do not have shoulders, so there is no ability to pull over.
- Ms. Merryman asked the Committee to allow local boards to decide where parking should be placed.

Neutral Information Presented: None

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 22, 2025