

**Senate Transportation Committee**  
*Vivian Hall 271-3091*

**HB 713-FN**, relative to mile markers along Route 112.

**Hearing Date:** May 6, 2025

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

**Time Closed:** 1:27 p.m.

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

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill directs the New Hampshire department of transportation to install and maintain mile markers along a portion of Route 112, also known as the Kancamagus Highway, and permits the department to install and maintain mile markers on an additional portion.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Stringham

Rep. Baldwin

Rep. Bucu

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**Who supports the bill:** Representative Jerry Stringham; Eric Pauer; Sarahlynn Williams; and Sarah McCarthy.

**Who opposes the bill:** Julie Smith

**Who is neutral on the bill:** Lee Baronas, State Traffic Engineer for New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

**Summary of testimony presented in support:**

**Representative Jerry Stringham, Grafton, District 3**

- Representative Stringham stated that this bill would direct the Department of Transportation to place mile marks along the 32-mile iconic stretch of Route 112, known as the Kancamagus Highway.
- He remarked how this is a high trafficked area where there is no cell service, and mile markers would help to increase public safety by providing more precise knowledge on the whereabouts of potential accidents or breakdowns.
- Representative Stringham explained that this bill was requested by the Lincoln Police Department and Lynwood ambulance and emergency providers.

- He affirmed that the mile marker project would be completely covered by federal funds and that the amendment to this bill helped to utilize funds to address additional projects.

**Senator Fenton** asked if Representative Stringham had any thoughts on the \$716,000 fiscal note displacing pre-established highway projects.

**Representative Stringham** responded that the Department of Transportation could speak to this question more.

**Senator McConkey** asked which committee this bill came from in the House of Representatives.

**Representative Stringham** replied that it came through Public Works with unanimous support.

**Senator McConkey** asked if when Representative Stringham brought the bill forward if he wanted strictly mile markers or if he was looking for the further delineation of the bill to mile markers every 1/5 of a mile.

**Representative Stringham** responded that it was up to the expertise of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.

**Senator McConkey** asked if the Public Works Committee knew the full scope of the bill when they deliberated on it.

**Representative Stringham** replied that they did.

**Senator McConkey** asked if there was any conversation regarding involving the New Hampshire Federal Delegation to secure funds as opposed to the existing Federal Highway Fund.

#### **Neutral Information Presented:**

#### **Lee Baronas, State Traffic Engineer for New Hampshire Department of Transportation**

- Mr. Baronas stated that he was representing the New Hampshire Department of Transportation in neutrality on the bill and was present to clarify and establish context for the bill.
- Mr. Baronas explained that mile markers are also called reference location signs, as they display the distance of the route, the route shield, and cardinal directions.
- He elaborated that the purpose of mile markers was to show motorists how far they have traveled, as well as provide reference for engineers and first responders.
- Mr. Baronas stated that New Hampshire has mile markers in various routes across the state but they are often dated and in short supply, so updating mile markers is always a priority.

- He stated that this bill would displace other safety projects that are already programmed using the established prioritization process.
- Mr. Baronas determined that two negative effects of the bill could be limited visibility of the markers due to snowbanks and impeding upon a scenic roadway with mile markers.
- Mr. Baronas clarified that the amendment would place mile markers on all of Route 112, from Bath to Conway.

**Senator McConkey** asked if the funds for this program would still be covered by federal funds with the enlarged amendment placing mile marks every 1/5th of a mile.

**Mr. Baronas** explained that this program would utilize Federal Highway Funds which can be inserted in the highway safety program funds.

**Senator McConkey** questioned if this bill were to move forward, if it would include more distance than just the Kancamagus Highway.

**Mr. Baronas** replied that the bill specifies Lincoln to Conway but there are advantages of efficiencies to place mile markers from Bath to Conway.

**Senator McConkey** asked how much extra distance would be added to the bill.

**Mr. Baronas** explained that by expanding the distance from Bath to Conway, it would grow from a 32-mile stretch to a 56-mile stretch.

**Senator McConkey** asked if the cell reception issue from Conway to Lincoln was similar to the distance from Lincoln to Bath.

**Mr. Baronas** replied that the cell reception issue is prevalent throughout the whole stretch of Route 112, with specific areas that receive steady cell reception.

**Senator McConkey** wondered what the official stance of Department of Transportation was on this bill.

**Mr. Baronas** replied that Department's official stance is neutral and they will do whatever the legislature requires.

**Senator Ricciardi** expressed concern with displacing other safety programs by prioritizing this bill and questioned if this bill could be delayed so that it could be funded properly.

**Mr. Baronas** explained that due to pressing concerns from safety groups, they wanted this bill to be enacted as soon as possible.

**Senator McConkey** asked if the state of New Hampshire owned the road and inquired if the state or the federal government would pay the maintenance fees.

**Mr. Baronas** replied the roadway and its accessories are the state of New Hampshire's to maintain. There are additional funding mechanisms such as the Federal Land Access Program as well as the Federal Highway Fund for issues such as these.

**Senator Ward** asked how much traffic should expected due to this bill.

**Mr. Baronas** explained that there could be potential traffic issues during the construction phase of the project but only during that time-frame.

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Date Hearing Report completed: May 9, 2025