

Amendment to HB 1129

1 Amend the title of the bill by replacing it with the following:

2
3 AN ACT relative to notice requirements for certain municipal public hearings, providing for
4 optional town meeting procedures during the state of emergency declared in response
5 to the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19), and directing certain CARES Act funding
6 to specific state agencies.
7

8 Amend the bill by replacing all after section 1 with the following:

9
10 2 Temporary Municipal Spending Authority; State of Emergency. During the state of
11 emergency declared as a result of the novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19), the provisions of RSA
12 32:13, II shall also apply to towns and districts, as defined in RSA 32:3, with a July to June fiscal
13 year, so that such towns or districts may make expenditures between July 1 and the date a budget is
14 adopted which are reasonable in light of prior year's appropriations and expenditures during the
15 same time period.

16 3 Temporary Optional Town Meeting Procedures; State of Emergency. Towns and school
17 districts that are unable to hold in-person annual meetings in 2020 or 2021 due to novel coronavirus
18 disease (Covid-19) may conduct virtual meetings in accordance with this section. At the option of the
19 governing body, the town or school district meeting may be convened and proceed to approve the
20 posted 2020 or 2021 warrant in the following fashion:

21 I. The governing body shall host a live virtual meeting and information session, during
22 which the proposed optional town or school district meeting procedures shall be outlined and
23 warrant articles discussed. At least 7 days prior to this informational session, notice shall be mailed
24 to all registered voters describing the procedures to be followed for conducting an annual meeting
25 pursuant to this section. After the live, virtual meeting is adjourned, questions and comments from
26 the public shall be solicited and received via electronic mail, voice mail, text message, or by other
27 electronic means.

28 II. Within 7 days of the information session, the governing body shall hold another live
29 virtual meeting to consider and address comments received from the public. The governing body
30 shall then discuss, debate, and be permitted to amend the posted warrant. The final warrant, as
31 amended, shall then be made available electronically for printing by voters to be brought to the
32 voting session, which shall be scheduled for a date and time to be determined by the governing body.

Amendment to HB 1129
- Page 2 -

1 III. Voting on final warrant articles shall be by secret ballot case by voters through drive-up
2 procedures to ensure appropriate social distancing. The first article on the warrant shall ask
3 whether voters approve these optional meeting procedures. If the optional procedures are not
4 approved by a simple majority, all other warrant articles shall be deemed disapproved. If the
5 optional voting procedures are approved, then all other votes on warrant articles shall be deemed the
6 final action of the meeting, provided that if the operating budget warrant article is not approved, the
7 governing body may vote to:

8 (a) Convene a meeting before September 1 to adopt an operating budget; or

9 (b) Elect to deem that the meeting has adopted the 2019 operating budget article, not
10 including separate warrant articles.

11 4 Online Access to Budget Information and Reports; CARES Act Funding. Beginning July 1,
12 2020, the commissioner of the department of administrative services, or the governor's office for
13 economic relief and recovery, shall separately report on the state website the disbursement of all
14 CARES Act funds, in a check register format, including the amount of the payment, the date of the
15 payment, the person or entity to whom the payment was made, the title and number of the
16 accounting unit and class code, the title and number of the expense account, and a brief description
17 of said disbursement.

18 5 CARES Act Funding; Homelessness Support. The treasurer and the governor shall transfer
19 \$10,000,000 from CARES Act funds to the bureau of homeless and housing services, department of
20 health and human services for the purpose of supporting existing housing and homelessness
21 services, rapid rehousing, and supporting our homeless shelter system with both capacity as well as
22 adaptations and staffing necessary during the state of emergency related to the novel coronavirus
23 disease (Covid-19), including adaptations relating to physical spaces and operations to support on-
24 site public health protocols and safe social distancing measures.

25 6 Covid-19 Housing Recovery Fund.

26 I. The treasurer and the governor shall transfer \$50,000,000 from CARES Act to the New
27 Hampshire housing finance authority for a Covid-19 housing recovery fund, with moneys to be
28 disbursed as follows:

29 (a) Assistance to landlords and renters impacted by the novel coronavirus disease
30 (Covid-19) by relieving unpaid rent due to Covid-19 in order maintain and stabilize the housing
31 market and avoid evictions for nonpayment of rent;

32 (b) Assistance to homeowners impacted by Covid-19 by relieving unpaid mortgages due
33 to Covid-19 in order to allow homeowners to stay in their homes and avoid foreclosure;

34 (c) A \$5,000,000 allocation to the affordable housing fund established in RSA 204-C:57,
35 with a priority for housing markets most impacted by Covid-19.

36 II. The New Hampshire housing finance authority shall develop any and all requests for
37 proposals, applications, and conditions on receipt of assistance to implement this section.

Amendment to HB 1129
- Page 3 -

1 III. The New Hampshire housing finance authority shall provide a report, on or by October
2 1, 2020, to the governor and the joint legislative fiscal committee on the implementation and
3 effectiveness of the Covid-19 housing recovery fund in achieving the purposes outlined herein.

4 7 Broadband Support. The treasurer and the governor shall transfer \$40,000,000 from CARES
5 Act moneys to the telecommunications division of the public utilities commission for the purpose of
6 enhancing access to broadband for families and businesses in underserved areas of New Hampshire.
7 The public utilities commission shall immediately issue a request for proposals for identified
8 underserved areas and provide grants that meet the need in identified underserved areas. Such
9 grants may be used to help leverage public-private provider partnerships for delivery of broadband
10 services to properties unserved by broadband as defined in RSA 38:38 I(c). These funds shall
11 support part of the public investment portion of partnerships that reach unserved properties through
12 a municipal or town-wide project, or infill projects designed to serve specific unserved areas.

13 8 Effective Date.

14 I. Section 1 of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

15 II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage.

Amendment to HB 1129
- Page 4 -

2020-1352s

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill changes the notice requirements for certain municipal public hearings by allowing notice of the hearing to be posted on the municipal website. The bill also temporarily permits legislative bodies with a fiscal year ending in June to make certain expenditures prior to the adoption of an official budget, temporarily provides for a virtual annual meeting procedure, requires online reporting of CARES Act disbursements, and makes certain distributions of CARES Act moneys.