

HB 456 - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

26Mar2025... 0908h

2025 SESSION

25-1155
08/05

HOUSE BILL

456

AN ACT prohibiting the use of certain local funds for lobbying.

SPONSORS: Rep. Potenza, Straf. 19; Rep. Ammon, Hills. 42; Rep. Noble, Hills. 2; Rep. Mazur, Hills. 44; Rep. Schmidt, Straf. 14

COMMITTEE: Legislative Administration

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill prohibits the use of certain local funds for lobbying activities.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough]~~.
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT prohibiting the use of certain local funds for lobbying.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Town Officers' Associations; Lobbyists. Amend RSA 31:8 to read as follows:

2 31:8 Town Officers' Associations. For the encouragement of equitable taxation and the
3 education of public officials ***acting as state agents*** in tax problems and other matters pertaining to
4 the proper and efficient discharge of the duties of their respective offices, each town and city shall
5 pay annually to the New Hampshire Association of Assessing Officials, the New Hampshire City and
6 Town Clerks' Association and the New Hampshire Tax Collectors' Association, such amounts as shall
7 be due for annual membership for its officials therein, providing that the amount paid for any one
8 annual membership hereunder shall not exceed ~~[\$20]~~ ***\$75***. Members of these several organizations
9 in addition to the annual membership [fee] ***dues***, shall be entitled to receive their actual expenses
10 incurred in attending the annual convention of their respective associations, the same to be audited
11 by the selectmen of towns and the finance committee of cities and paid out of city and town funds.
12 ***In accordance with RSA 15:5, I, no part of the annual membership dues shall be used to***
13 ***pay a lobbyist or an organization that pays part or all of the salary of a lobbyist. However,***
14 ***nothing in this section or in RSA 15:5 shall be construed to prohibit an individual member***
15 ***of such association from recording a position before the general court or a committee***
16 ***thereof.***

17 2 Authorization to Pay Dues. Amend RSA 31:8-a to read as follows:

18 31:8-a Authorization to Pay Dues. The ~~[board of selectmen may vote to pay, from amounts~~
19 ~~appropriated by the town for town officers' expenses, such amounts as shall be payable]~~ ***legislative***
20 ***body may vote to raise and appropriate such sums as required to pay*** for annual membership
21 in the New Hampshire Municipal Association and expenses incurred in attending regular meetings
22 of the said association. ***In accordance with RSA 15:5, I, [provided that the appropriation of such***
23 ~~dues has not previously been rejected by a vote at the annual town meeting and provided further~~
24 ~~that]~~ ***the association shall not record association positions before the general court or committees***
25 ***thereof, but may provide information to the general court or committees thereof.*** ~~[on matters~~
26 ~~which do not directly affect New Hampshire towns and cities, nor]~~ ***The association shall not***
27 ***engage in partisan political activity by endorsing, or otherwise supporting, any political party or***
28 ***candidate. Furthermore, no part of membership dues shall be contributed to or paid to an***
29 ***organization that pays part or all of the salary of a lobbyist, but nothing in this section or***
30 ***RSA 15:5 shall be construed to prohibit an individual public official from recording a***
31 ***position before the general court or a committee thereof.***

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3 Prohibited Activities. Amend RSA 15:5 to read as follows:

15:5 Prohibited Activities.

I. Except as provided in paragraph II, no recipient of a grant or appropriation of ***federal***, state, ***or local*** funds may use the state funds to lobby or attempt to influence legislation, participate in political activity, or contribute funds to any entity engaged in these activities.

II. Any recipient of a grant or appropriation of state ***or local*** funds that wishes to engage in any of the activities prohibited in paragraph I, or contribute funds to any entity engaged in these activities, ***may not use the state or local funds for such purpose.*** ~~[shall segregate the state funds in such a manner that such funds are physically and financially separate from any non-state funds that may be used for any of these purposes.]~~ ***Funds from other sources may be used for that purpose if such other funds are not commingled with the state or local funds and are kept physically and financially separate from the state or local funds. The*** mere bookkeeping separation of the state funds from other moneys shall not be sufficient.

4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.