

HB 1360 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-3071

09/08

HOUSE BILL **1360**

AN ACT establishing a legislative commission on municipal association oversight.

SPONSORS: Rep. Osborne, Rock. 2

COMMITTEE: Legislative Administration

ANALYSIS

This bill establishes a legislative commission on municipal association oversight.

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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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-Six

AN ACT establishing a legislative commission on municipal association oversight.

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

1 1 Statement of Findings and Purpose. The general court hereby finds that:

2 I. The New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) is a private nonprofit corporation
3 whose membership is composed primarily of New Hampshire municipalities and which is funded
4 substantially through municipal dues derived from taxpayer funds.

5 II. NHMA engages in legislative advocacy, lobbying, legal support, training, and other
6 activities that materially influence public policy in this state.

7 III. Despite its public funding base and influence, NHMA is not currently subject to any
8 oversight, transparency, or reporting obligations to the state or to the general court.

9 IV. Taxpayers have a legitimate interest in ensuring that municipal dues are spent
10 transparently and that lobbying activities are fully disclosed and not subsidized with public funds
11 without accountability.

12 V. Therefore, the purpose of this act is to establish a legislative commission on municipal
13 association oversight to ensure transparency, accountability, and legislative oversight of the
14 activities of NHMA.

15 2 New Chapter; Legislative Commission on Municipal Association Oversight. Amend RSA by
16 inserting after chapter 17-S the following new chapter:

17 CHAPTER 17-T

18 LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OVERSIGHT

19 17-T:1 Commission Established.

20 I. There is established a legislative commission to be known as the legislative commission on
21 municipal association oversight. The purpose of the commission is to provide legislative oversight of
22 the finances, activities, and use of public funds by the New Hampshire Municipal Association
23 (NHMA).

24 II. The commission shall consist of 7 voting members as follows:

25 (a) Three members of the New Hampshire house of representatives, appointed by the
26 speaker of the house of representatives, including:

27 (1) One member of the New Hampshire house finance committee;

28 (2) One member of the New Hampshire house municipal and county government
29 committee; and

30 (3) One other member of the house of representatives.

31 (b) Two members of the New Hampshire senate, appointed by the senate president.

1 (c) One public member, appointed by the governor.

2 (d) One municipal member who is a current or former elected or appointed official of a
3 New Hampshire city that is a member of NHMA, who is not currently serving in any board,
4 committee, or advisory capacity with NHMA, appointed by the senate president.

5 III. The members shall select a chairperson and vice chairperson from among the legislative
6 members. The chairperson shall alternate annually between a house member and a senate member.
7 Four members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

8 IV. The New Hampshire office of legislative budget assistant shall provide staff and
9 technical assistance to the commission and may attend meetings in a nonvoting advisory capacity.

10 17-T:2 Powers and Duties.

11 I. The commission shall:

12 (a) Receive and review annual audited financial statements and Form 990 filings of
13 NHMA;

14 (b) Require NHMA to file annually an itemized expenditure report detailing:

15 (1) Salaries and benefits by functional category;

16 (2) Expenditures for lobbying and legislative advocacy;

17 (3) Expenditures for legal services and outside counsel;

18 (4) Expenditures for training, conferences, and publications; and

19 (5) Administrative and overhead expenses;

20 (c) Hold at least one public hearing annually at which NHMA shall present its finances,
21 activities, and legislative priorities; and

22 (d) Submit an annual report with its findings and any recommendations for legislation
23 to the New Hampshire general court.

24 17-T:3 Compliance Requirement and Enforcement.

25 I. NHMA shall submit all required reports under this chapter to the commission no later
26 than 90 days after the close of its fiscal year.

27 II. If NHMA fails to submit the required reports by the deadline in paragraph I:

28 (a) NHMA shall be automatically prohibited from engaging in any lobbying or legislative
29 advocacy activities beginning on the ninety-first day after the close of its fiscal year, and continuing
30 until the reports are filed and accepted by the commission; and

31 (b) During any period of automatic suspension, NHMA shall be prohibited from
32 expending funds on lobbying or employing or contracting with any person registered as a lobbyist
33 with the New Hampshire secretary of state.

34 III. If the commission determines that NHMA has materially failed to comply with the
35 reporting requirements of this chapter, or that NHMA is acting in a manner contrary to the best
36 interests of its member municipalities, the commission may suspend NHMA's lobbying and
37 legislative advocacy operations, subject to the procedures in paragraph IV.

1 IV. Prior to issuing a discretionary suspension order under paragraph III, the commission
2 shall:

3 (a) Provide NHMA with written notice specifying the alleged noncompliance or conduct
4 at issue;

5 (b) Provide NHMA an opportunity to respond in writing within 30 days and to request a
6 public hearing;

7 (c) Hold a public hearing, if requested, at which NHMA may present testimony,
8 documents, and witnesses; and

9 (d) Deliberate and issue written findings of fact and conclusions explaining its
10 determination.

11 V. Upon a vote of at least 5 members following the process in paragraph IV, the commission
12 may issue an order suspending all lobbying and legislative advocacy activities by NHMA for a period
13 not to exceed one year.

14 VI. The commission may refer any violation of a suspension order or refusal to comply with
15 reporting requirements to the New Hampshire attorney general or the New Hampshire department
16 of revenue administration for appropriate enforcement action.

17 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.