

HB 392-FN - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

8Jan2026... 0026h

2025 SESSION

25-0058

09/08

HOUSE BILL

***392-FN***

AN ACT

directing the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health access and the department of environmental services' functions for environmental justice.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Belcher, Carr. 4; Rep. Corcoran, Hills. 28; Rep. Alexander Jr., Hills. 29; Rep. Turcotte, Straf. 4; Rep. Sabourin, Rock. 30; Rep. Terry, Belk. 7; Rep. Warden, Hills. 39

COMMITTEE:

Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs

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AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill directs the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health access and the department of environmental services' functions for environmental justice, and requires certain programs administered by the office of health access to be transferred to other divisions or offices.

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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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.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                    directing the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health access and the department of environmental services' functions for environmental justice.

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

1            1 Directive; Department of Health and Human Services; Office of Health Access. The  
2 department of health and human services is hereby directed to dissolve the office currently known as  
3 the office of health access (formerly the office of health equity), and is prohibited from using any  
4 allocated moneys for any project labeled as "health equity." Notwithstanding the dissolution  
5 required by this section, the following functions shall be transferred to other appropriate divisions or  
6 offices within the department and shall be preserved:

7            I. Provision of language access services and accommodations for individuals with  
8 disabilities, limited English proficiency, or sensory impairments, as required for compliance with  
9 federal civil rights laws.

10           II. Neutral community engagement to identify barriers to health services, provided no such  
11 engagement occurs on the basis of any category or process prohibited elsewhere by law.

12           III. Any other service required for compliance with federal laws.

13           IV. Any program strictly tailored to improving health access in rural areas.

14           2 Directive; Department of Environmental Services; Environmental Justice Programs. The  
15 department of environmental services is hereby prohibited from the use of any allocated moneys for  
16 those projects labeled "environmental justice."

17           3 Compensation of Certain State Officers; Salaries Established; Position Deleted. Amend RSA  
18 94:1-a, I(b) by deleting the following:

19           FF           Department of health and human services           director of the office of health equity

20           4 Repeal. RSA 126-A:88, I(hh), relative to the director of the office of health equity membership  
21 on the state health assessment and state health improvement plan advisory council, is repealed.

22           5 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

**HB 392-FN- FISCAL NOTE**  
**AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT directing the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health equity, department of environmental services' functions for civil rights and environmental justice, and the governor's council on diversity and inclusion.

**FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.**

| Estimated State Impact   |                             |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | FY 2025                     | FY 2026                                                                                      | FY 2027                                                                                      | FY 2028                                                                                      |
| <b>Revenue</b>           | \$0                         | \$0                                                                                          | \$0                                                                                          | \$0                                                                                          |
| <i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>   | None                        |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |
| <b>Expenditures*</b>     | \$0                         | \$100,000<br>decrease in<br>general funds;<br>Indeterminable<br>decrease in<br>federal funds | \$100,000<br>decrease in<br>general funds;<br>Indeterminable<br>decrease in<br>federal funds | \$100,000<br>decrease in<br>general funds;<br>Indeterminable<br>decrease in<br>federal funds |
| <i>Funding Source(s)</i> | General Fund, Federal Funds |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |
| <b>Appropriations*</b>   | \$0                         | \$0                                                                                          | \$0                                                                                          | \$0                                                                                          |
| <i>Funding Source(s)</i> | None                        |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |                                                                                              |

\*Expenditure = Cost of bill

\*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

**METHODOLOGY:**

This bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services to dissolve the Office of Health Equity, and deletes that Office's unclassified director from state statute. In addition, the bill prevents the Department from using funds from any project identified as "health equity," and prevents the Department of Environmental Services from using funds for any project labeled "civil rights and environmental justice." The Department of Health and Human Services states that salary and benefits for the director of health equity total approximately \$169,000 per year, and are paid for with 59 percent state general funds and 41 percent federal funds. This aspect of the bill would therefore result in savings of approximately \$100,000 per year of general funds and \$69,000 per year of federal funds. The Department further notes that the Office currently manages approximately \$4.6 million per year in federal grants and another \$700,000 in other federal funds. It is unclear if all such funds, or only a portion, would no longer be administered as a result of the bill.

The Department of Environmental Services states the bill could impact receipt of federal funds, in that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency requires recipients of federal funding to

comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as multiple other federal mandates. The Department states that it receives between \$80 - \$90 million annually in federal funding that requires compliance with Title IV. It is unclear what percentage of this will be impacted by the bill.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:**

Departments of Environmental Services and Health and Human Services