



January 22, 2025

Rep. Terry Roy, Chairman
House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee
Legislative Office Building
33 N State Street
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 511, relative to cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

Honorable Members of the House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee,

On behalf of the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA), I am writing to express our opposition to House Bill 511.

House Bill 511, which proposes to prohibit the adoption of sanctuary city policies by cities and towns, is a clear intrusion on local control that creates a new mandate by requiring that “a law enforcement agency shall use best efforts to support the enforcement of federal immigration law.”

NHMA opposes this bill for several reasons:

Intrusion on Local Authority: HB 511 usurps the authority of municipalities and local police departments to make decisions about how staff and resources should be allocated. Local officials, who are most familiar with their communities’ needs and priorities, should retain the authority to make such decisions without state interference.

Unfunded Mandate: The bill proposes no funding from the state to support its requirements. This places an undue financial burden on local governments, which are already operating under tight budget constraints.

Ambiguity and Compliance Issues: The language of the bill, specifically the requirement to use “best efforts” to support federal immigration law enforcement, is vague and open to interpretation. This ambiguity would leave local officials guessing on how to comply, potentially leading to inconsistent enforcement and legal challenges.

NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

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We respectfully request that the committee vote against House Bill 511 to preserve the autonomy and decision-making authority of our municipalities and local police departments and to reject the use of local property taxes to enforce federal laws.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Margaret Byrnes

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New Hampshire Municipal Association

N E W H A M P S H I R E M U N I C I P A L A S S O C I A T I O N

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