

Testimony for HB572 - establishing the "partners in housing" program, a low-interest loan and grant program under the housing champions fund to assist municipalities, counties, and developers in building workforce housing.

Dear Members of the Housing Committee,

My name is Stephanye Schuyler and I'm here today as a volunteer for AARP NH. On behalf of over 212,000 AARP members in the Granite State, AARP New Hampshire and its valued members we strongly support House Bill HB572. My experience in housing includes serving on the board of non profit housing developer The Housing Partnership, leading the Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast and serving on the board of the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority.

This program represents an innovative and much-needed approach to addressing the severe shortage of workforce housing in our state

By creating a low-interest loan and grant program, HB572 provides a strong state and local partnership toward the solution of the lack of affordable housing. It provides municipalities, counties, and developers with the critical resources they need to construct and expand workforce housing. This, in turn, will help attract and retain essential workers who form the backbone of our economy

One of the most commendable aspects of the "Partners in Housing" program is its collaborative approach between local governments and private developers, leveraging public and private resources for maximum impact. It empowers communities to solve their unique housing needs while ensuring that state funds are used effectively and responsibly. Moreover, the program's emphasis on low-interest loans and grants ensures that financing barriers do not stand in the way of progress,

AARP is deeply invested in long-term services and supports programs and understands how housing stability intersects with caregiving and community health. Access to affordable housing enables family caregivers to remain close to their loved ones, reduces stress, and supports aging in place. Workforce housing is essential for retaining ServiceLink staff and other critical personnel who deliver services that benefit our most vulnerable populations.

Investing in workforce housing is an investment in our state's future. It enhances the quality of life for residents, strengthens our economy, and creates vibrant, sustainable communities. HB572 aligns with these goals and represents a proactive solution to a complex problem.

I respectfully urge you to support this legislation and take a decisive step toward addressing our state's housing crisis. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your commitment to the well-being of our communities.

Sincerely,

Stephanye Schuyler on behalf of AARP NH
Portsmouth NH