

4/15/2025

To: NH House Housing Committee

From: Loretta Laurenitis and David Bonacci, Peterborough, NH

Re: Written Testimony for Public Hearing on SB84

As two NH voters, we strongly urge you to **OPPOSE and VOTE NO on SB84**, which would set maximum lot sizes for single-family residential uses based on the type of infrastructure servicing the lot.

We are opposed to this bill for the following reasons:

1. **SB84 removes local control and mandates a one-size-fits-all solution.** Local communities develop Master Plans, which provide guidance for what the communities' goals are. **SB84 undermines what those community visions are** and replaces them with what the State wants to impose on them. How does that represent our New Hampshire motto of "Live Free or Die"??? **Since when does the State know what is best for each of our diverse NH towns, cities, and municipalities? It doesn't!**

2. **SB84 threatens the rural nature, open space, wildlife, scenic views, preservation of Nature and the natural features of our environment. Not only are these highly regarded goals and values in Master Plans, but they provide an economic engine for drawing tourists into New Hampshire.** Carving up rural areas with lots no bigger than 88,000 square feet for a single-family home without municipal water and sewer infrastructure would result in a dense patchwork-spread of houses. **SB84 would chop up rural open spaces, incentivize the sale of agricultural lands for development, and produce suburban sprawl into what would otherwise be our cherished rural areas and natural landscapes.**

3. **The character and diversity of our NH communities is a large part of what makes NH an attractive state, drawing people, tourists, and businesses to our state. Why would the State want to undermine this economic value** by homogenizing the appearance of communities and mandating more urbanized development?

4. **SB84 sets NO DEFINITIVE STANDARDS** for communities **to determine what constitutes "a majority of land zoned for residential use"** --- as "the municipality shall include all areas zoned residential or any non-residential zones areas that allow single-family homes." **This is a confusing, unclear directive, that will incur costs for municipalities and increased taxes for citizens.**

5. **Requiring communities to "provide empirical evidence" that either the sewer system or water system "cannot support additional homes" further burdens communities with unexpected costs for unfunded, dubious state mandates.**

6. **There is nothing in this bill that makes any argument that these lot size requirements would do anything to promote affordable or workforce housing, so what is the purpose of this bill?** To have the state lord power over local control? To promote urban densification in our rural communities? To appease developers and lobbyists instead of the people who live in

and love their communities? To pretend that the housing crisis (which has to do with producing affordable and workforce housing) will simply be met by building more homes on smaller lots? The housing crisis is a product of multiple and complex factors, which will be better addressed by allowing individual communities to design innovative and creative solutions, unique to their own beloved communities.

For an excellent article on how **SB84 and other proposed zoning changes are threats to the unique spirits and diverse characters of NH communities**, please read: <https://www.fosters.com/story/opinion/columns/2025/03/10/selig-proposed-nh-zoning-law-changes-put-community-character-at-risk/81945608007/>

**Please OPPOSE and VOTE NO on SB84** and let NH communities design their own futures at the local level!

Thank you.