

# TOWN *of* HANOVER

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January 14, 2026

House Ways and Means Committee  
New Hampshire State House  
Concord, NH

## **Re: Opposition to HB 1474 – Meals and Rooms Tax Distribution Change**

Dear Chairperson Janigian, Vice Chair Ulery, Clerk Ohm, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Town of Hanover, I write to strongly oppose HB 1474, which would change the current distribution formula for Meals and Rooms (M&R) tax revenue. According to a preliminary analysis by the New Hampshire Municipal Association, this proposal would significantly reduce M&R revenue for Hanover, threatening our community's ability to provide essential municipal services.

Hanover is home to Dartmouth College, a globally recognized institution that serves as a key educational, cultural, and economic hub in New Hampshire. While many Dartmouth students live in on-campus housing, they are essential members of the Hanover community and are counted in the Town's census population. These residents depend on local infrastructure, add to traffic and transportation needs, support local businesses, and require ongoing municipal services.

The Town of Hanover provides police, fire, emergency medical services, public works, and other essential services that directly support both on- and off-campus populations. These services are offered regardless of the property's tax status and represent a significant and ongoing expense for local taxpayers. Excluding student residents from the population count would substantially underestimate the actual service demands placed on Hanover and other college host communities.

HB 1474 would disproportionately and unfairly penalize communities that host large, tax-exempt institutions, including Hanover, Durham, and Plymouth. This is particularly troubling given that students, faculty, staff, and visitors generate substantial Meals and Rooms tax revenue through local spending. Removing these residents from the distribution formula ignores both their economic contributions to the state and the municipal costs they create.

The bill also raises serious concerns about implementation. Additionally, no official fiscal analysis from the Department of Revenue Administration has been provided to show the proposal's community-by-community impacts. Moving forward with such a major policy change without transparent, detailed impact data risks creating long-term inequities across the state.

For these reasons, the Town of Hanover respectfully urges the Committee to oppose HB 1474. While the current M&R distribution formula may not be perfect, it is transparent, predictable, and reasonably reflects the service responsibilities borne by host communities. The proposed change would undermine the fiscal stability of college towns that already support significant tax-exempt property.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'RH' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Houseman ([he/him](#))  
Town Manager