



January 27, 2026

RE: HB 1553

Dear Chairman Alexander and Members of the Committee on Housing,

As the advocacy voice of the responsible pet care community, the [Pet Advocacy Network](#) represents the interests and expertise of retailers, companion animal suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, pet owners, and others involved in the many aspects of pet care across the United States. Our association promotes animal well-being and responsible pet ownership, fosters environmental stewardship, and ensures healthy pets' availability through our local, state, and federal work. In addition, we routinely advocate for legislative and regulatory proposals to protect the health, safety, and availability of companion animals.

On behalf of the responsible pet care community, **we ask that you vote YES on HB 1553, which caps monthly pet rent, and prohibits landlords from charging nonrefundable pet fees.**

The Pet Advocacy Network commends the legislature for proposing a limit on the predatory fees pet owners often face to keep their animals in their home. Nonrefundable pet fees can be a discriminatory practice that leads to housing insecurity and increased evictions for marginalized populations.

In most cases, standard security deposits are sufficient in covering any potential damage caused by a pet. While it's true that pets can contribute to rental property wear and tear, research shows that pet-related damage is frequently less than the wear and tear from tenants themselves. Despite this, renters with pets are still burdened with excessive, arbitrary, high fees, that put affordable, pet-friendly housing out of reach.

The [Human Animal Bond Research Institute](#) (HABRI) provides scientific evidence that demonstrates how pets improve their owners' heart health; alleviate depression; increase well-being; support child health and development; and contribute to healthy aging. These benefits should not be reserved only for those who can afford excessive fees. By capping unreasonable landlord pet fees, this legislation helps ensure all responsible pet owners have access to these benefits of the human-animal bond regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Rental housing costs are increasingly out of reach for many lower-income New Hampshire residents — and for renters with pets, the challenge is even greater. While more rental properties may now accept pets, the additional fees and costs associated with pet ownership often make these units unaffordable, effectively limiting housing options for responsible pet owners. Pet fees typically include both a nonrefundable deposit and a recurring monthly fee per animal, typically set at the discretion of the property manager. For example, a renter who pays a \$250 nonrefundable pet deposit and a \$50 monthly fee would spend \$850 in just one year for a single pet — on top of a security deposit and monthly rent.

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Reasonable, refundable pet deposits are understandable. However, charging excessive, nonfundable fees create unnecessary financial barriers and unfairly punish responsible pet owners. Eliminating nonrefundable fees for having a pet and setting the pet rent at 1% or less of the monthly rent, regardless of the number of animals, would benefit both the tenant and the landlord. Offering more pet-friendly rental options can attract more tenants and potentially lead to longer, more reliable tenancies.

This bill also rightly prohibits landlords charging fees for service or assistance animals. Under the federal Fair Housing Act, a person with an assistance animal must be afforded the same housing experience on the same terms as other tenants without assistance animals. A housing provider also cannot impose an additional security deposit for an assistance animal, even if it charges such a fee for pets, as service and assistance animals are not considered pets. We applaud the inclusion of this provision, as many people who rely on service or assistance animals are often unaware of their legal protections regarding housing fees, and this clarification will help ensure those rights are upheld.

We would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with you on additional legislation that promotes and protects responsible pet ownership. All of us in the responsible pet care community are dedicated to removing unnecessary barriers that keep people from enjoying all types of pet companionship, such as ownership restrictions that restrict housing opportunities or impose financial burdens just because of the type of pet someone chooses for their lifestyle.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alisa Clements
Director, Government Affairs

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