

## **Testimony of Eric Shaw**

Selectman, Town of New Hampton, New Hampshire

### **Before the House Ways and Means Committee**

**Re: HB 1293**

**Hearing Date:** 29 January 2026

**Position:** Support

### **Executive Summary**

HB 1293 would provide municipalities with a necessary tool to address significant property tax inequities created by large, tax-exempt private institutions. In the Town of New Hampton, a private boarding school with more than \$40 million in assessed property value, substantial annual revenues, and multimillion-dollar operating surpluses pays only about \$40,000 per year in local property taxes while receiving full municipal services. The resulting shift in tax burden exceeds \$400,000 annually and falls disproportionately on an aging and fixed-income population. This bill would help restore fairness by allowing towns to more equitably distribute the cost of essential public services.

### **Written Testimony**

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee.

My name is Eric Shaw. I am a Selectman in the Town of New Hampton, and I am here to testify in support of HB 1293.

While on its face this bill may appear to address a relatively narrow issue, for the taxpayers of New Hampton it is anything but minor. In our case, this legislation would provide an essential tool to reduce a substantial and growing property tax burden on our residents.

One of the largest property owners in New Hampton is the New Hampton School, a private educational institution with a long and respected history. The total assessed value of the School's property exceeds \$41 million. Currently, the School receives a property tax exemption of approximately 82 percent of that value, resulting in the Town portion of their tax payments of roughly \$40,000 per year.

In return, the Town provides full municipal services, including fire, police, and road maintenance, to a campus population of more than 430 students and faculty.

Compounding this issue, the School has increasingly purchased properties within the Village District, converting them to faculty housing or demolishing them entirely. In either case, these properties are removed from the municipal tax base, shifting the burden onto other taxpayers. This alone has increased the Town's tax burden by more than \$85,000 per year.

In addition, the local school district collects more than \$250,000 annually from New Hampton taxpayers to cover the educational costs of children of New Hampton School faculty who reside in tax-exempt housing on campus.

Taken together, these factors impose an additional burden of more than \$400,000 per year on our residents — roughly a 10 percent increase in the local tax burden — disproportionately affecting an aging population and those on fixed incomes.

For context, tuition at the New Hampton School is approximately \$75,000 per year. The School has an endowment exceeding \$40 million, annual revenues of approximately \$30 million, and operates with an annual surplus of roughly \$3.3 million. Our total Town budget is just over \$4 million. Despite these resources and its significant tax exemption, the Town receives only about \$40,000 per year in municipal taxes.

To date, the School has declined to enter into a voluntary Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreement with the Town to address these inequities.

HB 1293, or similar legislation, would help restore fairness by allowing the property tax burden to be distributed more equitably and sustainably.

Thank you for your time and consideration.