



Education Coalition Communities 2.0 New Hampshire

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Town of Carroll
Town of Hebron
Town of Holderness
Town of Hollis
Town of Jackson
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Statement of:

Nathan Lunney – Chair, Education Coalition Communities 2.0

Regarding:

NH House Ways & Means Committee

House Bill 1800 and House Bill 1787

February 4, 2026

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nathan Lunney, and I am the City of Portsmouth's Deputy City Manager - Finance & Administration. I currently serve as Chair of the Education Coalition Communities 2.0, a group of 23 member cities and towns that have come together to ensure that any future education funding formula does not unfairly mandate that property tax **money raised in one town be sent to another town** by way of the Department of Revenue Administration.

Education Coalition Communities 2.0 stands in fundamental opposition to the provisions of HB 1800 and HB 1787 that would require all education property tax to be submitted to the state which would recreate an unfair funding scheme previously repealed in 2011 and rejected again last session.

On behalf of the members of the Education Coalition Communities 2.0, I offer our respectful **opposition to core elements** of both House Bill 1800 and House Bill 1787.

Please find my comments in bulleted items below hoping to make your review and consideration quicker and easier.

Impact on Local Taxation

- These bills would require municipalities to levy local property taxes as a “state tax,” then redistribute those funds with **no accountability** to local taxpayers.
- This would represent a major departure from the longstanding practice where **local property taxes fund local needs, particularly education**.
- These bills would reinstate the “**donor community**” model, which was short-lived and unsuccessful.

Broader Consequences for Municipalities and Schools

- Increased tax burdens could force towns and cities **to cut education** and municipal priorities **to avoid overall tax increases**.
- There could be potential negative impacts on education programs – contradicting the stated purpose of improving education funding.
- These bills would create winners and losers again, creating unfairness, and fostering tension among municipalities.

Additional Observations

- House Bill 1800 would unfairly increase the tax burden of specifically those property owners with students enrolled in local public schools.
- Both bills would create a lack of predictability for municipal budgeting.
- Education Coalition Communities 2.0 does not take a position on the tax credits or exemptions being proposed in either bill.
- The Coalition does generally support tax relief for property owners and would support the bill provisions to study property tax relief.

House Bills 1800 and 1787 would create an **unfair distribution of property taxes**, previously rejected for good reason. Education Coalition Communities 2.0 supports a **fair, comprehensive, and accountable** approach to education funding that commits locally raised taxes to support local education spending.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Education Coalition Communities 2.0 stands ready to work with you and your committee as you work to address this very challenging issue.