

Hello NH State Representatives on the NH House Committee on Municipal and County Government,

My name is Rick Hiland. I am a NH native, resident of Albany NH, Albany Selectman and Albany's Representative to the Carroll County Communications District. I wanted to drive down to Concord for the Public Hearing on SB585-FN on Tuesday, April 7th and testify in person, but I have a doctor's appointment late morning that I made several months ago which will not allow me to attend.

With that said, I am writing to ask that you support SB 585-FN.

A little history on the Carroll County Communications District (CCCD) which consists 16 of 19 towns in Carroll County, shows that the CCCD planning committee, when setting up the District and writing the required District Agreement per RSA 53-G, was established, not as an actual Internet Service Provider (ISP) as allowed in the RSA 53-G, but as a municipal entity to encourage, facilitate and promote current ISPs in NH to fund through investment and grants and to install high speed internet/broadband infrastructure to all premises in Carroll County. We have been very successful in our mission and currently approximately 99.9% of the county has access in some form to high speed internet/broadband service. We will be working with our ISPs on the remaining few premises with the forthcoming BEAD funding in the very near future.

The CCCD is not a property taxing authority per our District Agreement and operates solely on grants and donations. The reason for this amending legislation to RSA 53-G:10 Audits, is that our only source of income being from donations and grants, we only write 4-5 checks per year; Post Office Box (\$80), Liability Insurance (Primex \$1300), Web hosting & domain fee (\$62) and the cost of a required independent audit (\$3500). Only certified accounting firms can conduct municipal audits and we have not been able to find anyone to perform our audit for less even as simple as it seems. They basically double check balancing our check book for \$3500. The cost of the annual independent audit is prohibitive at \$3500 and that money could be better used helping to educate internet users young & old on how to use the internet, AI and security which is the direction we are currently moving toward in the District.

The proposed amending legislation in SB 585-FN provides financial oversight that would allow Districts like ours to petition the NH Department of Revenue Administration annually requesting a waiver to the independent audit requirement provided the District meet the requirements stated in the legislation.

Please include in the record.

If you should have any questions, please contact me anytime.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rick Hiland

Rick Hiland

Albany NH Selectman

Carroll County Communication District – Albany Rep

Albany ZBA

LMWVSWD – Solid Waste District- Albany Rep / Chairman

r.hiland@myfairpoint.net

603-447-4833

