

Bill as Introduced

HB 486-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2021 SESSION

21-0602

10/05

HOUSE BILL

486-FN

AN ACT

relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Fellows, Graf. 8; Rep. Walz, Merr. 23; Rep. Adjutant, Graf. 17; Rep. Gordon, Graf. 9

COMMITTEE:

Municipal and County Government

ANALYSIS

This bill increases the income and property value criteria for claimants of the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief against statewide education property taxes.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through~~]

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty One

AN ACT relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief; Statewide Education Property
2 Tax; Income and Property Criteria. Amend RSA 198:57, III and IV to read as follows:

3 III. An eligible tax relief claimant is a person who:

4 (a) Owns a homestead or interest in a homestead subject to the education tax;

5 (b) Resided in such homestead on April 1 of the year for which the claim is made, except
6 such persons as are on active duty in the United States armed forces or are temporarily away from
7 such homestead but maintain the homestead as a primary domicile; and

8 (c) Realizes total household income of:

9 (1) [~~\$20,000~~] **\$37,000** or less if a single person;

10 (2) [~~\$40,000~~] **\$47,000** or less if a married person or head of a New Hampshire
11 household.

12 IV. All or a portion of an eligible tax relief claimant's state education property taxes, RSA
13 76:3, shall be rebated as follows:

14 (a) Multiply the total local assessed value of the claimant's property by the percentage of
15 such property that qualifies as the claimant's homestead;

16 (b) Multiply [~~\$100,000~~] **\$220,000** by the most current local equalization ratio as
17 determined by the department of revenue administration;

18 (c) Multiply the lesser of the amount determined in subparagraph (a) or (b) by the
19 education tax rate as shown on the tax bill under RSA 76:11-a;

20 (d) Multiply the product of the calculation in subparagraph (c) by the following
21 percentage as applicable to determine the amount of tax relief available to the claimant:

22 (1) If a single person and total household income is:

23 (A) less than [~~\$12,500~~] **\$23,100**, 100 percent;

24 (B) [~~\$12,500~~] **\$23,100** but less than [~~\$15,000~~] **\$27,800**, 60 percent;

25 (C) [~~\$15,000~~] **\$27,800** but less than [~~\$17,500~~] **\$32,400**, 40 percent; or

26 (D) [~~\$17,500~~] **\$32,400** but less than or equal to [~~\$20,000~~] **\$37,000**, 20 percent.

27 (2) If a head of a New Hampshire household or a married person and total household
28 income is:

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3 (e) The amount determined by subparagraph (d) is the allowable tax relief in any year.

4 2 Application. RSA 198:57 as amended by section 1 of this act shall apply to statewide
5 education property taxes assessed on and after April 1, 2021.

6 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

**HB 486-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.

FISCAL IMPACT: State County Local None

STATE:	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Appropriation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
<i>Funding Source:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> General	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Highway	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

METHODOLOGY:

This bill makes the following modifications to the Low and Moderate Income Homeowner Property Tax Relief program:

- 1) increases the household income amounts for both single and married persons eligible for the program;
- 2) increases the claimant's minimum homestead amount multiplied by the applicable local equalization ratio from \$100,000 to \$282,000; and
- 3) increases the single person and total household income amounts used to determine the percentage of the tax relief rebate to be made available to the claimant.

The Department of Revenue Administration is unable to determine the impact this bill will have on State expenditures due to not possessing all the necessary information. The Department anticipates the increase in the income thresholds and maximum qualifying homestead values will result in more claimants seeking tax relief and an increase in relief amounts under this bill. Therefore, an increase in rebates being paid from the education trust fund will occur by an indeterminable amount. This indeterminable increase in state expenditures would require additional appropriations to pay these additional claims beginning in FY22.

The Department of Revenue Administration was appropriated \$1,750,000 in FY20 and \$1,750,000 in FY21 for the Low and Moderate Income Homeowner Property Tax Relief program. It is assumed this bill will be effective July 1, 2021.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Revenue Administration

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HOUSE BILL **486-FN**

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SPONSORS: Rep. Fellows, Graf. 8; Rep. Walz, Merr. 23; Rep. Adjutant, Graf. 17; Rep. Gordon, Graf. 9

COMMITTEE: Municipal and County Government

HOUSE : OTP 19-0 CONSENT, SENATE : OTP 5-0 CONSENT

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AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Revenue Administration

CHAPTER 95
HB 486-FN - FINAL VERSION

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HOUSE BILL **486-FN**

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SPONSORS: Rep. Fellows, Graf. 8; Rep. Walz, Merr. 23; Rep. Adjutant, Graf. 17; Rep. Gordon, Graf. 9

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CHAPTER 95
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4 95:2 Application. RSA 198:57 as amended by section 1 of this act shall apply to statewide
5 education property taxes assessed on and after April 1, 2021.

6 95:3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: July 01, 2021
Effective Date: August 30, 2021

Committee Minutes

SENATE CALENDAR NOTICE

Election Law and Municipal Affairs

Sen James Gray, Chair
Sen Regina Birdsell, Vice Chair
Sen Ruth Ward, Member
Sen Donna Soucy, Member
Sen Rebecca Perkins Kwoka, Member

Date: April 8, 2021

HEARINGS

Thursday

04/15/2021

Election Law and Municipal Affairs	REMOTE 000	9:00 a.m.
(Name of Committee)	(Place)	(Time)
9:00 a.m. HB 126	relative to notice of execution of tax lien to mortgagees.	
9:15 a.m. HB 164	relative to the acquisition, sale, or demolition of municipal land or buildings.	
9:30 a.m. HB 409	relative to filling certain vacancies among members of school boards and other school district offices.	
9:50 a.m. HB 411	establishing a commission to study the equalization rate used for the calculation of a property tax abatement by the New Hampshire board of tax and land appeals, the superior court, and all cities, towns, and counties.	
10:15 a.m. HB 486-FN	relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.	

Committee members will receive secure Zoom invitations via email.

Members of the public may attend using the following links:

1. Link to Zoom Webinar: <https://www.zoom.us/j/92947850864>
2. To listen via telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): 1-301-715-8592, or 1-312-626-6799 or 1-929-205-6099, or 1-253-215-8782, or 1-346-248-7799, or 1-669-900-6833
3. Or iPhone one-tap: US: 13126266799, 92947850864# or 16465588656, 92947850864#
4. Webinar ID: 929 4785 0864
5. To view/listen to this hearing on YouTube, use this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjBZdtrjRnQdmg-2MPMiWrA>
6. To sign in to speak, register your position on a bill and/or submit testimony, use this link:
<http://gencourt.state.nh.us/remotecommittee/senate.aspx>

The following email will be monitored throughout the meeting by someone who can assist with and alert the committee to any technical issues: remotesenate@leg.state.nh.us or call (603-271-6931).

EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY FOLLOW

Sponsors:

HB 126

Rep. Cahill

Rep. DeSimone

HB 164

Rep. Abrami

Rep. Gilman

HB 409

Rep. Rung

Rep. Danielson

HB 411

Rep. Merner

HB 486-FN

Rep. Fellows

Rep. Walz

Rep. Adjutant

Rep. Gordon

Tricia Melillo 271-3077

James P. Gray
Chairman

Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee

Tricia Melillo 271-3077

HB 486-FN, relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.

Hearing Date: April 15, 2021

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gray, Birdsell, Ward, Soucy and Perkins Kwoka

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill increases the income and property value criteria for claimants of the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief against statewide education property taxes.

Sponsors:

Rep. Fellows
Rep. Gordon

Rep. Walz

Rep. Adjutant

Who supports the bill: 60 signed in support (to view the sign in sheet please email the Committee Aide)

Who opposes the bill: 1

Who is neutral on the bill: 1

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Representative Sallie Fellows

- The Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief program provides Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT) rebates to low-income homeowners.
- Recipients pay their full property tax bill to their tax collector, then they send a rebate application to the State Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and receive a check from the State.
- This program has no impact on local taxes and is not related to local tax exemption programs.
- This is an important program intended to help low-income people, many of whom are senior citizens, remain in their homes, but it is in danger of disappearing.
- In the first year of the program, 10% of homeowners applied. Last year only 1.5% applied. In the first year (rebates for 2003 tax bills) 27,000 households

received \$7.5 million in rebates. Since then, participation has slowly dropped by 80%. In 2019, 6,900 people received \$1.1 million, and in 2020 5,800 people received less than \$900,000.

- One reason for the decline in participation is the shrinking size of rebate amounts.
- Eighteen years ago, the maximum rebate was almost \$500, with an average rebate of \$280. Last year the maximum was \$183 (64% less), and the average rebate was \$152. By next year, the maximum will be around \$160.
- The maximum rebate has shrunk because the state's tax base (the value of all the real estate) has grown, while the amount raised from SWEPT is set by statute at \$363 million. This has caused the tax RATE to drop but doesn't mean SWEPT property tax BILLS have gone down.
- Since property values have nearly doubled, homeowner tax bills for SWEPT have remained about the same. Rebates have shrunk because the rebate is limited to the first \$100,000 of home value.
- Participation has also dropped because fewer people now have incomes below the caps set in 2002.
- The only people who can get the maximum rebate are single homeowners with an annual adjusted gross income below \$12,500 or a multi-person household with an income below \$25,000.
- People with higher incomes received 60%, 40% or 20% of the maximum.
- Participation and rebate amounts will continue to drop unless the income limits are updated, and the property value cap is raised.
- Without a change, the maximum rebate on 2021 tax bills will be around \$160.
- The updates in this bill will increase the maximum rebate to about \$350 and make more people eligible.

Representative Beth Walz

- This program is great public policy particularly for seniors.
- These small changes can make a huge difference to someone on a fixed income.
- The benefit of the program now is not how it was originally imagined.
- Updating this program will be little cost to the state with a very high return.

Jeff McLynch

- As HB 486 would make real progress in improving taxpayer equity, NHSFFP strongly supports the bill and urges the Committee to recommend it as ought to pass.
- Unsurprisingly, New Hampshire's property tax levels, whether measured on a per capita basis or relative to the size of its economy, consistently rank it among the highest, if not the very highest – among the fifty states.
- Despite its heavy reliance on the property tax and, in turn, that tax's heavy toll on the least well-off, New Hampshire does little to mitigate the impact of the tax on those struggling to make ends meet.

- The state's principal approach to property tax relief – the Low- and Moderate-Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief program – has all but evaporated in recent years.
- In 2003, the program provided roughly \$7.5 million in property tax relief to over 27,000 Granite State households; by 2018, those figures had dwindled to
- fewer than 7,000 households receiving a total of just \$1.1 million in rebates – even as property taxes continued to climb.
- HB 486 seeks to reverse that trend and to aid New Hampshire homeowners facing financial hardship. More specifically, if enacted into law, HB 486 would increase both the number of homeowners eligible to participate in the Low- and Moderate Income Property Tax Relief Program and the value of the rebates they would receive.
- It would raise the income thresholds for the program – which have not been adjusted since its inception nearly two decades ago – to allow single homeowners with incomes under \$37,000 and married couples with incomes less than \$47,000 to take part.
- It would also raise the limit on the amount of assessed value used to determine homeowner rebates from \$100,000 to \$220,000.
- In bolstering property tax relief, HB 486 is consistent with one of the key recommendations offered by the recent Commission to Study School Funding.

Representative Perez

- Homeowners in her district are having a hard time paying the property taxes.
- Seniors are finding it hard to stay in their homes.
- She believes this is a good bill.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition: None

TJM
Date Hearing Report completed: April 16, 2021

SENATE CALENDAR NOTICE
Finance

Sen Gary Daniels, Chair
Sen John Reagan, Vice Chair
Sen Bob Giuda, Member
Sen Erin Hennessey, Member
Sen Chuck Morse, Member
Sen Lou D'Allesandro, Member
Sen Cindy Rosenwald, Member

Date: May 6, 2021

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Tuesday	05/11/2021
(Day)	(Date)
Finance	REMOTE 000
(Name of Committee)	(Time)

1:00 p.m. ~~EXECUTIVE SESSION ON SECOND COMMITTEE BILLS~~

1:15 p.m. **BUDGET WORK SESSION**

Executive Department
Department of Administrative Services
Office of the Child Advocate
Office of Professional Licensure & Certification
Department of Revenue Administration
Human Rights Commission
Employment Security
Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food
Department of Safety
Adult Parole Board
Department of Energy
Office of Strategic Initiatives
Public Utilities Commission
Department of Justice
Liquor Commission

PLEASE NOTE: THE AGENCY LISTING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

Members of the public may attend using the following links:

1. To join the webinar: <https://www.zoom.us/j/94129128587>
2. Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): 1-301-715-8592, or 1-312-626-6799, or 1-929-205-6099, or 1-253-215-8782, or 1-346-248-7799, or 1-669-900-6833
3. Or iPhone one-tap: 13126266799,,94129128587# or 19292056099,,94129128587#
4. Webinar ID: [941 2912 8587](https://www.zoom.us/j/94129128587)
5. To view on YouTube, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjBZdtrjRnQdmg-2MPMiWrA>

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Deb Martone 271-4980

Gary L. Daniels
Chairman

Speakers

Senate Remote Testify

Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee Testify List for Bill HB486 on 2021

Support: 60 Oppose: 1 Neutral: 1 Total to Testify: 4

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Testifying</u>
Bosen, Theodore	tlbosen@gmail.com	603 468-4628	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	Yes
Walz, Mary Beth	Mbwalz@leg.state.nh.us	603-568-8208	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	Yes
Fellows, Sallie	Fellows4NH@myfairpoint.net	Not Given	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	Yes
McLynch, Jeff	jmclynch@fairfundingnh.org	603-945-9988	A Lobbyist	NH School Funding Fairness Project	Support	Yes
Lucas, Janet	janluca1953@gmail.com	16037267614	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Pauer, Eric	secretary@BrooklineGOP.org	603.732.8489	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No
Morin, Nathan	nathan.morin321@gmail.com	603.684.8495	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Kathy, Hubert	Kathyhubert@icloud.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Vincent, Laura	lvlauravincen5@gmail.com	603.783.4849	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Porter, Marjorie	maporter995@gmail.com	603.464.0225	An Elected Official	Hillsborough District 1	Support	No
Ellermann, Maureen	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Chase, Wendy	wendy.chase@leg.state.nh.us	Not Given	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No
Merchant, Gary	gary.merchant@leg.state.nh.us	Not Given	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No
GILMAN, REPRESENTATIVE JULIE	JULIE.GILMAN.LEG.STATE.NH.US	Not Given	An Elected Official	Town of Exeter	Support	No
Green, Debra	laffalot37@gmail.com	603.562.8177	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Mayne, Kenneth	kbmayne@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
DiLorenzo, Charlotte	cbdilorenzo@comcast.net	603.659.2140	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No
Torpey, Jeanne	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Kidder, Kristine	kriskidder@comcast.net	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Kelley, Eamon	eamon.kelley@leg.state.nh.us	Not Given	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No
Reed, Barbara D.	BDRreed74@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Mennella, Alexandra	amennella1@protonmail.com	16466109858	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Garland, Ann	annhgarland@gmail.com	603.678.8143	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
GINGRAS, JULIE	julietgingras73@gmail.com	(603) 233-14	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Goldwater, Catherine	cathy.goldwater@gmail.com	603.860.3756	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Jachim, Nancy	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Brookmeyer, Janet	brookmeyermusic@gmail.com	603.667.1356	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Rasmussen, Elissa	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Dolkart, Vivian	viviandolkart@comcast.net	603.865.5117	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
DeMark, Richard	demarknh114@gmail.com	603.520.5582	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Feder, Marsha	marshafeder@gmail.com	603.860.8743	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Clark, Denise	denise.m.clark03055@gmail.com	603.213.1692	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Douville, Linda	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Spielman, Kathy	jspielman@comcast.net	603.397.7879	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Monahan, Sean	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
test, test	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Neutral	No
Richards, Martha	maplerichards@gmail.com	603.536.2279	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Taylor, Frances	egg lady5@gmail.com	603.968.3846	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Taylor, Malcolm	malcolmt295@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Laker-Phelps, Gail	lpsart@tds.net	603.798.5394	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Gordon, Ned	44towne@gmail.com	603.393.8760	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No
Oxenham, Evan	evan.oxenham@gmail.com	603.727.9368	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Irwin, Virginia	biddy.irwin@gmail.com	603.863.3582	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Cranage, Amy	cranhan@comcast.net	603.252.8531	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No
Oxenham, Lee	leeoxenham@comcast.net	603.727.9368	An Elected Official	Sullivan Co., District 1	Support	No

4/15/2021

Senate Remote Testify

Falk, Cheri	Falk.cj@gmail.com	603.801.4651	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Damon, Claudia	cordsdamon@gmail.com	603.226.4561	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Perencevich, Ruth	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Richman, Susan	susan7richman@gmail.com	603.868.2758	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
McArt, Ebba	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Berch, Paul	pberch@myfairpoint.net	603.399.4960	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
rettew, ann	abrctew@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Rogers, Rep Katherine	katbeep@icloud.com	603/496-8521	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
Sinclair-Pappas, Barbara	Not Given	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Weber, Jill	jill@frajilfarms.com	603.978.1263	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Hayes, Randy	rcomposetr@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Schmidt, Jan	tesha4@gmail.com	603.880.6060	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
Weston, Joyce	jweston14@roadrunner.com	603.276.0862	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
Cloutier, John	jocloutier@comcast.net	16034773690	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
Ward, Gerald W.R.	Ward4staterep@gmail.com	Not Given	An Elected Official	Myself	Support	No	'
Hamblct, Joan	joan.hamblct@leg.state.nh.us	603.205.4925	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'
Platt, Elizabeth-Anne	lizanneplatt09@gmail.com	Not Given	A Member of the Public	Myself	Support	No	'

Testimony

Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief

Historical Claims Data

The Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief program (RSA 198:56-57) was designed to lessen the economic burden of the Education Property Tax on certain at-risk taxpayers.

Eligible claimants apply for relief to the New Hampshire Department of Revenue using Form DP-8. Claimants must include a copy of their final property tax bill and federal income tax return for the claim year and any additional documentation as required by law. Completed Forms DP-8 must be postmarked no earlier than May 1, and no later than June 30 following the due date of the final property tax bill.

Claim Year	Claims Granted	Total Relief Paid
2003	27,208	\$7.5 million
2004	25,059	\$4.9 million
2005	22,381	\$3.9 million
2006	19,570	\$3.3 million
2007	18,579	\$3.1 million
2008	17,600	\$3.1 million
2009	16,066	\$3.1 million
2010	12,100	\$2.3 million
2011	11,622	\$2.3 million
2012	11,674	\$2.3 million
2013	10,222	\$2.0 million
2014	9,414	\$1.8 million
2015	8,541	\$1.6 million
2016	7,938	\$1.4 million
2017	7,258	\$1.2 million
2018	6,865	\$1.1 million

2019

5,818

\$0.9

* The claim year corresponds with the taxable period, starting April 1st, for the property tax bill from which relief is being sought.

Rep. Sallie Fellows, sponsor

For April 15, 2021

HB 486 Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief

The Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief program provides Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT) rebates to low-income homeowners. Recipients pay their full property tax bill to their tax collector, then they send a rebate application to the State Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) and receive a check from the State. This program has no impact on local taxes and is not related to local tax exemption programs.

This is an important program intended to help low-income people, many of whom are senior citizens, remain in their homes, but it is in danger of disappearing. In the first year of the program, 10% of homeowners applied. Last year only 1.5% applied. In the first year (rebates for 2003 tax bills) 27,000 households received \$7.5 million in rebates. Since then, participation has slowly dropped by 80%. In 2019, 6,900 people received \$1.1 million, and in 2020 5,800 people received less than \$900,000.

One reason for the decline in participation is the shrinking size of rebate amounts. Eighteen years ago, the maximum rebate was almost \$500, with an average rebate of \$280. Last year the maximum was \$183 (64% less), and the average rebate was \$152. By next year, the maximum will be around \$160.

The maximum rebate has shrunk because the state's tax base (the value of all the real estate) has grown, while the amount raised from SWEPT is set by statute at \$363 million. This has caused the tax RATE to drop, but doesn't mean SWEPT property tax BILLS have gone down. Since property values have nearly doubled, homeowner tax bills for SWEPT have remained about the same. Rebates have shrunk, because the rebate is limited to the first \$100,000 of home value.

Participation has also dropped because fewer people now have incomes below the caps set in 2002. The only people who can get the maximum rebate are single homeowners with an annual adjusted gross income below \$12,500 or a multi-person household with an income below \$25,000. People with higher incomes received 60%, 40% or 20% of the maximum.

Participation and rebate amounts will continue to drop unless the income limits are updated, and the property value cap is raised. Without a change, the maximum rebate on 2021 tax bills will be around \$160. The updates in this bill will increase the maximum rebate to about \$350 and make more people eligible.

I hope you believe as I do that helping low-income people, particularly seniors, stay in their homes is important, and you will look favorably upon this bill.



NH SCHOOL
**Funding Fairness
Project**

**Testimony of Jeff McLynch,
Project Director, NH School Funding Fairness Project, on HB 486
before the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee,
Thursday, April 15, 2021**

Chairman Gray, Senator Soucy, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this morning.

For the record, my name is Jeff McLynch and I am the Project Director of the New Hampshire School Funding Fairness Project (NHSFFP), a nonprofit organization that seeks to educate citizens and policymakers about the system New Hampshire uses to fund its public schools, to build awareness of the shortcomings of that system, and to advocate for changes in law to make that system more equitable for students and taxpayers alike.

As HB 486 would make real progress in improving taxpayer equity, NHSFFP strongly supports the bill and urges the Committee to recommend it as ought to pass.

As the members of this Committee are aware, one can not discuss New Hampshire's tax system without talking about the property tax. Indeed, the property tax is far and away the largest tax collected in New Hampshire, generating close to \$4 billion to support state and local public services in 2019, well in excess of any other form of taxation levied in the state. Unsurprisingly, New Hampshire's property tax levels, whether measured on a per capita basis or relative to the size of its economy, consistently rank it among the highest – if not the very highest – among the fifty states.

Yet, the property tax is also an unfair tax, as it places far greater responsibility on low- and moderate-income taxpayers than it does on more affluent ones. According to data from the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, the poorest 20 percent of New Hampshire households (i.e. households with incomes under \$26,700) paid 6.2 percent of their incomes in property taxes in 2018. In stark contrast, the wealthiest 1 percent of households, each of which enjoyed an income in excess of \$514,900, paid an effective property tax rate of just 1.9 percent.

Despite its heavy reliance on the property tax and, in turn, that tax's heavy toll on the least well-off, New Hampshire does precious little to mitigate the impact of the tax on those struggling to make ends meet. The state's principal approach to property tax relief – the Low- and Moderate-Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief program – has all but evaporated in recent years. In 2003, the program provided roughly \$7.5 million in property tax relief to over 27,000 Granite State households; by 2018, those figures had dwindled to fewer than 7,000 households receiving a total of just \$1.1 million in rebates – even as property taxes continued to climb.

HB 486 seeks to reverse that trend and to aid New Hampshire homeowners facing financial hardship. More specifically, if enacted into law, HB 486 would increase both the number of homeowners eligible to participate in the Low- and Moderate Income Property Tax Relief Program and the value of the rebates they would receive. It would raise the income thresholds for the program – which have not been adjusted since its inception nearly two decades ago – to allow single homeowners with incomes under \$37,000 and married couples with incomes less than \$47,000 to take part. It would also raise the limit on the amount of assessed value used to determine homeowner rebates from \$100,000 to \$220,000.

In bolstering property tax relief, HB 486 is consistent with one of the key recommendations offered by the recent Commission to Study School Funding. As members of the Committee may know, that Commission met for much of last year, despite the pandemic, and received hours of input from school finance officials, tax administrators, academic experts, and members of the public. They examined New Hampshire's school property tax system at length and, after doing so, recommended that, among other changes:

"The state should enhance taxpayer equity through property tax relief targeted to homeowners and renters through a low- and moderate-income property tax relief program. This program should include updated limits to income, home value, and net worth, and be satisfactorily funded by the state."

Finally, at the present time, the legislature is actively considering changes in tax law intended to spur economic growth and to ease the difficult economic situations many families now face due to the pandemic. Any effort to use New Hampshire's tax system to achieve those ends should start with property tax relief efforts along the lines of HB 486. HB 486 would put money in the pockets of Granite Staters still coping with the economic consequences of the pandemic and, thus, allow them to shop and spend at local businesses striving to remain open. For these reasons, I once again urge the Committee to recommend HB 486 as ought to pass. I look forward to working with the members of the Committee to make New Hampshire's tax system more fair for everyone and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Voting Sheets

**Senate Election Law
& Municipal Affairs Committee
EXECUTIVE SESSION RECORD
2021 Session**

Bill **HB 486**

Hearing date: 4-15-2021

Executive Session date: 4-15-2021

Motion of: OTP Vote: 5-0

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Gray, Chair	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Birdsell, Vice Chair	X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Ward	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Soucy	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Perkins-Kwoka	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion of: Consent Vote: 5-0

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Gray, Chair	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Birdsell, Vice Chair	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Ward	X	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Soucy	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Perkins-Kwoka	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Motion of: _____ Vote: _____

Committee Member	Present	Made by	Second	Yes	No
Sen. Gray, Chair	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Birdsell, Vice Chair	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Ward	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Soucy	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sen. Perkins-Kwoka	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reported out by: Sen. Soucy ✓

Notes: _____

Senate Finance Committee

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bill # HB 486-FN

Hearing date: N/A

Executive session date: 05/11/21

Motion of: Opp

VOTE: 7-0

<u>Made by</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Seconded</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Reported</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>by Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>by Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>
Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>	Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>	Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>
Rosenwald <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rosenwald <input type="checkbox"/>	Rosenwald <input type="checkbox"/>
D'Allesandro <input type="checkbox"/>	D'Allesandro <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	D'Allesandro <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Morse <input type="checkbox"/>	Morse <input type="checkbox"/>	Morse <input type="checkbox"/>
Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>	Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>	Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>

Motion of: _____

VOTE: _____

<u>Made by</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Seconded</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Reported</u> Daniels <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>by Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>by Senator:</u> Reagan <input type="checkbox"/>
Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>	Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>	Giuda <input type="checkbox"/>
Rosenwald <input type="checkbox"/>	Rosenwald <input type="checkbox"/>	Rosenwald <input type="checkbox"/>
D'Allesandro <input type="checkbox"/>	D'Allesandro <input type="checkbox"/>	D'Allesandro <input type="checkbox"/>
Morse <input type="checkbox"/>	Morse <input type="checkbox"/>	Morse <input type="checkbox"/>
Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>	Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>	Hennessey <input type="checkbox"/>

<u>Committee Member</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Reported out by</u>
Senator Daniels, Chairman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Reagan, Vice-Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Giuda	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Hennessey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Rosenwald	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator Morse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senator D'Allesandro	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Amendments: _____

Notes: _____

Committee Report

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SENATE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
FOR THE CONSENT CALENDAR

Thursday, April 15, 2021

THE COMMITTEE ON Election Law and Municipal Affairs

to which was referred **HB 486-FN**

AN ACT

relative to eligibility for the low and moderate
income homeowners property tax relief.

Having considered the same, the committee recommends that the Bill

OUGHT TO PASS

BY A VOTE OF: 5-0

Senator Donna Soucy
For the Committee

This bill is an update to the NH Department of Revenue Low and Moderate Income Homeowners Property Tax Relief Program. This program is used to rebate a portion or all of the property owner's statewide education property taxes. The bill amends RSA 198:57 to increase the household income eligibility, property assessment and tax relief percentages which have not been updated since 2003. With these small changes, residents living on a fixed low income who currently do not qualify for this rebate, will now qualify for some relief.

Tricia Melillo 271-3077

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SENATE
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

THE COMMITTEE ON Finance

to which was referred **HB 486-FN**

AN ACT

relative to eligibility for the low and moderate
income homeowners property tax relief.

Having considered the same, the committee recommends that the Bill

OUGHT TO PASS

BY A VOTE OF: 7-0

Senator Lou D'Allesandro
For the Committee

Deb Martone 271-4980

General Court of New Hampshire - Bill Status System

Docket of HB486

Docket Abbreviations

Bill Title: relative to eligibility for the low and moderate income homeowners property tax relief.*Official Docket of HB486.:*

Date	Body	Description
1/10/2021	H	Introduced (in recess of) 01/06/2021 and referred to Municipal and County Government HJ 2 P. 50
3/1/2021	H	Public Hearing: 03/01/2021 11:00 am Members of the public may attend using the following link: To join the webinar: https://www.zoom.us/j/97119253057 / Executive session on pending legislation may be held throughout the day (time permitting) from the time the committee is initially convened.
3/9/2021	H	Committee Report: Ought to Pass (Vote 19-0; CC) HC 18 P. 21
4/7/2021	H	Ought to Pass: MA VV 04/07/2021 HJ 5 P. 44
4/7/2021	H	Reconsider (Rep. Osborne): MF VV 04/07/2021 HJ 5 P. 50
4/7/2021	S	Introduced 04/01/2021 and Referred to Election Law and Municipal Affairs; SJ 11
4/8/2021	S	Remote Hearing: 04/15/2021, 10:15 am; Links to join the hearing can be found in the Senate Calendar; SC 19
4/15/2021	S	Committee Report: Ought to Pass, 04/22/2021; Vote 5-0; CC; SC 20
4/22/2021	S	Ought to Pass: RC 23Y-1N, MA; Refer to Finance Rule 4-5; 04/22/2021; SJ 12
5/12/2021	S	Committee Report: Ought to Pass, 05/20/2021; SC 24
5/20/2021	S	Ought to Pass: MA, VV; OT3rdg; 05/20/2021; SJ 16
6/25/2021	S	Enrolled Adopted, VV, (In recess 06/24/2021); SJ 20
6/25/2021	H	Enrolled (in recess of) 06/24/2021
7/6/2021	H	Signed by Governor Sununu 07/01/2021; Chapter 95; Eff: 08/30/2021

NH House

NH Senate

Docket of HB486

Docket Abbreviations

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3/9/2021	H	Committee Report: Ought to Pass (Vote 19-0; CC) HC 18 P. 21
4/7/2021	H	Ought to Pass: MA VV 04/07/2021 HJ 5 P. 44
4/7/2021	H	Reconsider (Rep. Osborne): MF VV 04/07/2021 HJ 5 P. 50
4/7/2021	S	Introduced 04/01/2021 and Referred to Election Law and Municipal Affairs; SJ 11
4/8/2021	S	Remote Hearing: 04/15/2021, 10:15 am; Links to join the hearing can be found in the Senate Calendar; SC 19
4/15/2021	S	Committee Report: Ought to Pass, 04/22/2021; Vote 5-0; CC; SC 20
4/22/2021	S	Ought to Pass: RC 23Y-1N, MA; Refer to Finance Rule 4-5; 04/22/2021; SJ 12
5/12/2021	S	Committee Report: Ought to Pass, 05/20/2021; SC 24
5/20/2021	S	Ought to Pass: MA, VV; OT3rdg; 05/20/2021; SJ 16
6/25/2021	S	Enrolled Adopted, VV, (In recess 06/24/2021); SJ 20
6/25/2021	H	Enrolled (in recess of) 06/24/2021
7/6/2021	H	Signed by Governor Sununu 07/01/2021; Chapter 95; Eff: 08/30/2021

NH House

NH Senate

Other Referrals

Senate Inventory Checklist for Archives

Bill Number: HB 486-FN

Senate Committee: ELMA

Please include all documents in the order listed below and indicate the documents which have been included with an "X" beside

Final docket found on Bill Status

Bill Hearing Documents: {Legislative Aides}

Bill version as it came to the committee

All Calendar Notices

Hearing Sign-up sheet(s)

Prepared testimony, presentations, & other submissions handed in at the public hearing

Hearing Report

Revised/Amended Fiscal Notes provided by the Senate Clerk's Office

Committee Action Documents: {Legislative Aides}

All amendments considered in committee (including those not adopted):

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

Executive Session Sheet

Committee Report

Floor Action Documents: {Clerk's Office}

All floor amendments considered by the body during session (only if they are offered to the senate):

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

Post Floor Action: (if applicable) {Clerk's Office}

___ Committee of Conference Report (if signed off by all members. Include any new language proposed by the committee of conference):

___ Enrolled Bill Amendment(s)

___ Governor's Veto Message

All available versions of the bill: {Clerk's Office}

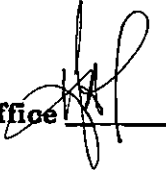
as amended by the senate ___ as amended by the house

final version

Completed Committee Report File Delivered to the Senate Clerk's Office By:

Committee Aide

Date

Senate Clerk's Office 

Senate Inventory Checklist for Archives

Bill Number: HB 486-FN

Senate Committee: FINANCE -
2ND COMMITTEE

Please include all documents in the order listed below and indicate the documents which have been included with an "X" beside

Final docket found on Bill Status

Bill Hearing Documents: {Legislative Aides}

Bill version as it came to the committee

All Calendar Notices

Hearing Sign-up sheet(s)

Prepared testimony, presentations, & other submissions handed in at the public hearing

Hearing Report

Revised/Amended Fiscal Notes provided by the Senate Clerk's Office

Committee Action Documents: {Legislative Aides}

All amendments considered in committee (including those not adopted):

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

Executive Session Sheet

Committee Report

Floor Action Documents: {Clerk's Office}

All floor amendments considered by the body during session (only if they are offered to the senate):

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

___ - amendment # _____ ___ - amendment # _____

Post Floor Action: (if applicable) {Clerk's Office}

Committee of Conference Report (if signed off by all members. Include any new language proposed by the committee of conference):

Enrolled Bill Amendment(s)

Governor's Veto Message

All available versions of the bill: {Clerk's Office}

___ as amended by the senate ___ as amended by the house

___ final version

Completed Committee Report File Delivered to the Senate Clerk's Office By:

Deb Martone
Committee Aide

07/29/21
Date

Senate Clerk's Office _____