



# New Hampshire State Senate **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Senate sends strong signal on state budget**

*Finance Committee removing non-budgetary items from HB2*

(Concord) Members of the Senate Finance Committee are sending a strong signal regarding the state's budget. Meeting in Concord today, senators made it clear they are focused on state spending and plan to remove non-budgetary items from HB 2, the so-called trailer bill.

Finance Chairman Chuck Morse (R- Salem) laid out his three goals for the day saying, "We are putting the Senate's position in, taking non-budgetary items out and addressing gaps in the budget passed by the House." He noted that HB 2 went from 87 pages as originally introduced to 137 pages when it passed the House. "Many of those additions have little or nothing to do with state spending. The Senate intends to come up with a budget that is responsible and lives within our means. Given the challenges we face, our job on Finance is to focus on the budget, not on extraneous policy matters," he said.

Senate President Bragdon (R-Milford) added that taxpayers are tired of politicians loading up legislation with extras like unrelated amendments and pet projects. "The trailer bill is designed to supply the technical statutory changes necessary to implement the policy decisions that are part of the budget. It is not supposed to include non-budgetary policy decisions such as collective bargaining. We believe an issue like that requires a public hearing as well as an up or down vote by legislators," he said.

When it came to fixing the gaps in the budget, the Finance Committee concentrated on nearly \$200 million dollars of concern including: \$110m in uncompensated care to hospitals, \$30m in retiree health care, \$26m for mental health services and \$20m for the developmentally disabled waitlist.

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