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Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee Passes Final Portion of Senate Democrats' Granite Promise Plan

CONCORD - Today, the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee passed Amendment #1352s to HB 1129, the third section of the Senate Democrats' Granite Promise Plan. The amendment, sponsored by Senator Jon Morgan (D-Brentwood), creates policy and provides funding for municipalities in response to COVID-19, allocates \$10 million of CAREs Act funding to the bureau of homeless and housing services, and creates a COVID-19 Housing Recovery Fund through the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority.

After the committee vote, Senator Jon Morgan (D-Brentwood) issued the following statement:

"Across the state our municipalities have worked to navigate the operational difficulties created by COVID-19. These challenges were particularly felt around our March and May town meetings. This bill provides that guidance. These measures are important steps for our municipalities as we begin to recover as a state.

As we look towards our future, steps must be taken to both relieve those sectors whose current operations have had to quickly adapt and will need to be permanently altered for public safety such as our homeless shelters, as well as provide essential tools towards our resilience. This proposal allocates \$10 million in federal CAREs Act funds to the bureau of homeless and housing services to support our existing services including temporary rehousing and staffing, as well as looking towards adaptations to our physical spaces and operations to support safe social distancing measures. Additionally, \$50 million is allocated to a COVID-19 Housing Recovery Fund to assist both landlords and renters impacted by COVID-19. No one should lose their home due to circumstances out of their control. Finally, in tandem with the work championed by Senator Jay Kahn and Senator Jeanne Dietsch, we allocate \$40 million from the CAREs Act to expand broadband across the state through grants for underserved areas.

These steps will only be the beginning. We cannot ignore the work that needs to be done in the short term to allow our state to begin the recovery process. However, this crisis has brought long standing challenges to the forefront. The time to act is now to ensure we not only recover, but we come out of this crisis stronger than before."