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Senate Democrats Pass Granite Promise Plan to Provide COVID-19 Relief and Recovery

CONCORD - Today, the New Hampshire Senate passed three legislative packages that make up the Granite Promise Plan, a proposal from Senate Democrats to provide relief and recovery to Granite Staters impacted by the coronavirus pandemic and increase New Hampshire's resiliency in the future. The three pieces of the Granite Promise Plan - HB 1166, HB 1129, and HB 1246 - include provisions for workers protections, annual meeting and budget provisions for municipalities, school districts, and village districts, and enhancements for child care scholarships and long term care facilities. HB 1166, HB 1129, and HB 1246 next go to the House of Representatives for a concurrence vote, which requires a simple majority.

After the vote, Senate President Donna Soucy (D-Manchester) and Senate Majority Leader Dan Feltes (D-Concord) issued the following statements:

"Our working families, long term care facilities, cities, towns, and schools have disproportionately felt the weight of the economic and public health impacts of coronavirus. The relief and recovery efforts needed to help New Hampshire begin to feel whole once again are multifaceted and will require funding. It is critical that we put protections in place for our workers and those struggling through unemployment that exist outside of an emergency order," stated **Senate President Donna Soucy (D-Manchester)**. "As of yesterday, the state has reopened and we will soon begin to feel the impact as we once again change the way we interact. When the emergency orders are lifted, those protected under the benefits offered will still likely be in need of help. Right now, there are immediate needs to be addressed like increasing child care scholarships and funding for long-term care facilities. In the long term, we must take steps that increase New Hampshire's resiliency and protect those most in need. As a Legislature, we are elected to work in the best interest of New Hampshire and this legislation does just that."

Senate Majority Leader Dan Feltes (D-Concord) added, "The Granite Promise Plan looks both to the immediate needs of our state as well as the long term impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. It has been made clear that measures must be taken to permanently implement changes made to New Hampshire's unemployment insurance during the state of emergency including, waiving the waiting week, and addressing state law that currently penalizes people seeking unemployment benefits who took family and medical leave in the prior year. Our workers' safety has to remain a top priority and include paid leave for COVID-19 testing and

state provided PPE for our small businesses. New Hampshire will be addressing the impacts of COVID-19 for years to come. Today's passage of the Granite Promise Plan is a start to that recovery. With today's vote, we take care of our most vulnerable citizens -- our residents in our nursing homes. We look forward to working with our House colleagues and Governor Sununu to advance these legislative initiatives."

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