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House Supports Senate Democrats' Granite Promise Plan to Provide COVID-19 Relief and Recovery

CONCORD - Today, the House concurred with the Senate's recommendation of Ought to Pass as Amended on the 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 pieces of the Granite Promise Plan - HB 1166, HB 1129, HB 1246, and HB 1247 - include provisions for workers protections, annual meeting and budget provisions for municipalities, school districts, and village districts, enhancements for child care scholarships and long term care facilities, and ensure modest protections for renters and homeowners once the moratoriums on evictions for nonpayment of rent and foreclosures expire July 1. HB 1166, HB 1129, HB 1246, and HB 1247 will next be enrolled with the Secretary of State's office and then go to the governor's desk, at which time he will have five days to act.

After the vote, Senate Majority Leader Dan Feltus (D-Concord) issued the following statement:

"New Hampshire is hurting. Our working families, long term care facilities, cities, towns, and schools have all felt the devastating economic and public health impacts of the coronavirus. Our self-employed workers have been fighting through outdated unemployment systems and some have yet to see any relief. Our job as elected officials is to work in the best interest of the state. Our current systems are not working. Sununu doesn't talk about the people are falling through the cracks at his press conferences, or how to solve their problems. Action must be taken now to deal with these problems and to better prepare us for the likely second wave and ensure the challenges Granite Staters have faced are not repeated.

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. Child care scholarships are necessary for

getting people back to work and our long-term care facilities, who have been hit the hardest by this pandemic, need additional funding and support, and an independent review and recommendations for how to deal with a likely second wave. Finally, on July 1, the moratorium on evictions for nonpayment of rent and on foreclosures expires, with no protections in place. That's why HB 1247 is so critical, providing modest protections so folks have a fighting shot to stay in their homes and so our housing market and our economy isn't destabilized. If we want to look out for homeowners on Main Street, not Wall Street banks, HB 1247 must become law.

I thank the House for their vote today. The long term welfare of our home state should not be a divisive issue, it is a New Hampshire issue; the Governor's silence on whether or not he will support these issues is deafening. I urge him to sign these bills, or at least allow them to become law without his signature. ”

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