



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

May 29, 2018

Governor's Veto Message Regarding House Bill 1736

By the authority vested in me, pursuant to part II, Article 44 of the New Hampshire Constitution, on March 30th, 2018, I have vetoed House Bill 1736, relative to increasing the threshold required for governor and council approval of expenditures from the dam maintenance fund.

Under current law, governor and council approval is required for all expenditures from the dam maintenance fund that are made for reconstruction projects. RSA 482:54, V currently defines reconstruction as performance of work to "restore" a structure to "its original condition" or "to upgrade it to current design standards" with the cost in excess of \$75,000. House Bill 1736 would amend the definition of reconstruction so that it only includes work with a cost in excess of \$150,000, thus increasing the threshold for governor and council approval from \$75,000 to \$150,000.

The governor and council, the only popularly elected executive branch officials, play a key role in overseeing the fiscal management of the executive branch and expenditure of taxpayer dollars. Because increasing the threshold for governor and council approval directly affects the governor and council's ability to discharge their fiscal management and oversight duties delegated by Part II, Article 56 of the New Hampshire Constitution, I am concerned that councilors were not consulted as this bill went through the legislative process. In addition, I have seen no compelling evidence that the current thresholds, and the need to seek governor and council approval, has created any administrative difficulties for the department of environmental services. New Hampshire's proud tradition of careful fiscal management counsels against reducing popularly elected officials' oversight of expenditures of taxpayer dollars absent a compelling justification.

For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed House Bill 1736.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clith T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor