

NH Coalition to End Homelessness

Representative Terry Roy
House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee
One Granite Place, Room 159
Concord, NH 03301

January 19, 2026

Dear Chairman Roy and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Chisholm, and I am the Executive Director of the NH Coalition to End Homelessness (NHCEH). On behalf of NHCEH, I present this testimony regarding HB 1499, relative to additional grounds for eviction under the landlord and tenant statute. NHCEH is in opposition to this bill and the significant impacts it will have on NH families who rent.

In the 2025 Edition of NHCEH's *The State of Homelessness in NH*, the analysis of the Granite State's homelessness data showed that homelessness remains a critical issue in the Granite State. In calendar year 2024, **6,281 NH residents experienced homelessness** – more people than live in Hopkinton. **Almost half of these individuals were either a youth or an older adult (55+).**

Given the current housing crisis that NH continues to face, it is important that we look for ways to help families remain in housing rather than increasing the ways that they can be evicted. HB 1499 would unnecessarily expand grounds for eviction in NH, when landlords are already able to refuse to rent to individuals based on their background check results. The current NH eviction laws already allow landlords to evict on the extremely broad basis of "other good cause," which can include the tenant's failure to disclose information during the application process. In fact, the passage of HB 60 in 2025 will, upon its enactment in July 2026, give NH landlords the power to evict tenants *without* just cause at the end of their leases.

The powers HB 1499 proposes for landlords already exist through other lawful means in NH. Passing this legislation will create severe complications for entire households. The way that the bill is written, all members of a renting household would be punished for the behavior of a single individual in the apartment. According to HB 1499, if an 18-year-old high school student is arrested and convicted of a crime (including possession of marijuana), their single parent and 3 younger siblings will lose their housing as well, along with their 80-year-old grandparent who the family is caring for, as they can no longer live independently. It is unfathomable that vulnerable individuals could be evicted and thrown into homelessness in the midst of NH's current housing crisis based on a single household member's behavior.

NHCEH strongly believes in the power of prevention and keeping NH families in housing as a key strategy in fighting the public health crisis of homelessness in the Granite State. We hope you join us in opposing HB 1499 and vote against the increased risks it would impose on members of NH households who rent.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony. NHCEH's mission is to be a statewide partner in reversing the trends NH is experiencing in its homelessness rates and making safe, stable housing accessible to everyone. If you have any questions or would like any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at jchisholm@nhceh.org.

NH Coalition to End Homelessness

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jen".

Jennifer Chisholm, LICSW, MLADC
Executive Director
NH Coalition to End Homelessness