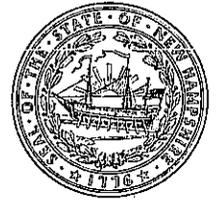




The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 12, 2010

The Honorable Emma Rous, Chairman
N.H. House of Representatives
Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 207
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 1391 – An act implementing the Tools for Schools program in public schools

Dear Chairman Rous and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) in support of HB 1391, which seeks to require the Department of Education to ensure that every public school in New Hampshire possesses a copy of the United States Environmental Protection Agency *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools* program and encourage all public schools to implement the program. DES understands that a healthy indoor environment is crucial for maintaining proper indoor air quality and optimum learning conditions in our schools, and we work diligently through our Environmental Health Program to assist school districts in developing and maintaining healthy indoor environments.

The DES Environmental Health Program has been an active member of the New Hampshire Partnership for Healthy Schools, and has been working with our partners over the past several years to improve environmental conditions in several schools that have requested assistance. In each of these interventions we have used the EPA *Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools* program to help staff identify and address issues affecting indoor air quality. In all cases, this program has been very effective in finding simple, cost effective solutions for addressing problems, improving conditions and maintaining healthy indoor environments. Not only does the *Tools for Schools* program help to improve school indoor air quality, but it is also an effective tool for improving learning conditions, minimizing energy use, reducing maintenance costs, and decreasing absenteeism.

DES views the required actions in this bill as an opportunity to proactively encourage New Hampshire schools to make use of this highly effective prevention tool, and we fully support enactment of this legislation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer our support for HB 1391. Please contact Richard G. Rumba, Administrator of the Environmental Health Section, at 271-1987 if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Rep. C. Beck
Senator H. Janeway
Senator M. Kelly