



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Clark B. Freise, Assistant Commissioner

March 22, 2017

The Honorable James Gray
Chair, Senate Public and Municipal Affairs Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 102
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 121 – An Act relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities when collecting motor vehicle registration fees.

Dear Chair Gray and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) regarding HB 121 relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities. NHDES supports this bill.

Motor vehicles account for more than half of the emissions of air pollutants that cause the formation of ground level ozone, a respiratory irritant that can cause severe health impacts to the sick, the very young, the elderly, and those with chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma. Motor vehicles also contribute over one-third of the state's greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. Reducing the use of single occupant vehicles is a key strategy to reducing these emissions.

Historically, many communities have used their portion of the motor vehicle registration fee, authorized under RSA 261:153 VI, to support local projects that improve mobility within the community for all users, including using the funds to support operation of local public transportation. Such projects reduce emissions from the transportation sector by reducing use of single occupant vehicles. The fee, which was established in 1997, has never been increased. Increasing the maximum allowable fee that communities may collect for support of transit and other mobility projects will enable local projects that have environmental benefits and improve mobility for residents.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support of HB 121. Should you have further questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Craig Wright, Director, Air Resources Division (271-1088, craig.wright@des.nh.gov), or Rebecca Ohler, Administrator, Technical Services Bureau (271-6749, Rebecca.ohler@des.nh.gov).

Sincerely,

Clark B. Freise
Assistant Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB121: Reps. Higgins, Cloutier, Gould, Pierce, Sykes, Crawford, Sytek, Sen. Watters