



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Kevin Avar
Chairman, Energy and Natural Resources Committee
State House, Senate Chamber
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 397 – An Act relative to permitting fees under the shoreland protection act

Dear Chairman Avar and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 397. This bill, as amended by the House, proposes to establish a cap on application filing fees for projects solely funded by municipal, county, state, or federal entities when applying for permits required under the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act, RSA 483-B. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) supports this bill as amended. NHDES believes that the capped fees strike a balance between the need to maintain adequate funding for the Shoreland Program, which is funded solely through filing fees, and the need to recognize the funding constraints that municipalities and other public entities face when planning projects. These constraints take the form not only of fund availability but of navigating fund allocation processes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this legislation. Should you have questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact either Darlene Forst, Shoreland Section Supervisor, at 603-271-4067 or Darlene.c.forst@des.nh.gov or Rene Pelletier, Assistant Director, Water Division at 603-271-2951 or Rene.j.pelletier@des.nh.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 397: Representatives Pearl, Lang, Baldasaro; Senators French, Gannon