

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY BRIEF

## HOUSING

### DATA & KEY POINTS

Strafford County communities are experiencing the same housing pressures seen across New Hampshire, including rising costs, limited availability, and growing impacts on workforce stability, public health, and economic vitality. These challenges affect renters and homeowners alike and are increasingly cited by employers, schools, healthcare providers, and municipalities as barriers to community sustainability.

### Housing Supply and Production Trends

New Hampshire has made progress increasing housing production, but current levels remain insufficient to meet demand.

- In 2025, New Hampshire reached a 20 year high in housing production, with more than 5,800 new housing units permitted statewide.
- Despite this increase, the state is still not producing enough housing to keep pace with population and workforce needs.
- Research supported by New Hampshire Housing and statewide partners indicates New Hampshire must sustain higher production levels over multiple years to close the supply gap.
- New housing development continues to be unevenly distributed, placing added pressure on communities like those in Strafford County that already serve as employment, education, and service hubs.

### Voter Sentiment and Public Support

Housing affordability and availability are not niche issues. They are top concerns for New Hampshire voters across political lines. According to recent statewide polling conducted by Housing Action NH:

- 87% of New Hampshire voters believe the legislature should take action to address housing costs and supply.
- 80% of New Hampshire voters say there are not enough homes that average people can afford to rent or buy.
- 76% of New Hampshire voters say housing costs have had a negative impact on their or their loved ones' lives, with 38% of voters experiencing challenges affording other basic needs like groceries or medicine due to the high cost of housing.

This strong voter consensus provides a clear mandate for pragmatic, solutions focused housing policy.

### QUICK STATS

#### NH Statewide:

**NH Median Sales Price 2025:**  
Single Family Homes: \$535,000  
Condos: \$421,000  
-NH Association of Realtors  
# of Owner Households: 399,663 (73%)  
# of Renter Households: 151,523 (27%)  
# of Renter Households Below 50%  
AMI : 71,239 (45%)  
NH 50% AMI (Area Median Income):  
\$64,650 anually  
**2025 NH Fair Market Rents:**  
1 Bedroom: \$1,401/mo  
2 Bedroom: \$1,824/mo  
-National Low Income Housing Coalition,  
2025 Out of Reach Report

#### Strafford County NH:

**NH Median Sales Price 2025:**  
Single Family Homes: \$485,000  
-NH Association of Realtors  
# of Owner Households: 34,733 (67.1%)  
# of Renter Households: 17,065 (32.9%)  
• Point2Homes, U.S. Census Bureau

US Dept of Housing & Urban Dev.  
(HUD) Area for Strafford Co.  
• "Ports-Rochester, NH HUD Metro FMR Area"  
**2025 Fair Market Rents:**  
1 Bedroom: \$1,677/mo  
2 Bedroom: \$2,194/mo



Scan for full polling data report

# SUPPORT

# Legislation

# OPPOSE

- **HB 1357 – Permits Modern Manufactured Housing by Right**
  - Would require that modern manufactured homes be permitted where other single-family homes are allowed.
- **HB 1103 - Community Revitalization Tax Relief Credits Expanded**
  - Allows municipalities to utilize community revitalization tax relief credits (RSA 70-E) on a wider variety of properties and structures.
- **HB 1726 – Surplus State Property for Affordable Housing**
  - Each agency must identify unused or underutilized real estate that may be suitable for development or redevelopment as affordable housing.
- **SB 415 - Condominium Exemption Expansion**
  - Amends the Condominium Act in New Hampshire (RSA 356-B:49) by changing a unit count threshold related to exemptions. Specifically, the bill increases the number of condominium units eligible for a statutory exemption from 10 units to 50 units.

- **HB 348 – Eligibility for Local Assistance and Residency Requirements**
  - Would allow municipalities to adopt a residency requirement of up to 90 days before an individual can receive local general assistance, which often includes emergency housing support and rental assistance
- **HB 1598 – Expedites The Eviction Process**
  - Would shorten the eviction process for nonpayment or lease breaches, potentially limiting tenant due process.
- **HB 1336 – Increases Security Deposit Limits**
  - Proposal would allow landlords to require up to two months' security deposit.
- **HB 1499 - Additional Grounds for Eviction**
  - Adds new grounds under RSA 540:2 for eviction if:
    - The tenant or any occupant of the rented unit is unlawfully present in the United States,
    - The tenant or occupant has, within 3 years prior to the eviction notice, been convicted of certain violent or serious crimes
    - The tenant or any occupant is a registered sexual offender as defined under state law.

## HB 1196 - Repeal of the Housing Champions Program

**(Oppose)** Passed the House Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

### What Is the Housing Champions Program?

Passed in the 2023 budget and supported by Republican Gov. Chris Sununu, the Housing Champions program allows cities and towns to apply to the Department of Business and Economic Affairs to be designated as “Housing Champions.” Getting that designation requires the municipality to take a number of pro-housing actions, such as creating workforce housing districts, adopting an inclusionary zoning ordinance, lowering minimum lot sizes for new houses, implementing sewer or water improvements, conducting training for planning board members, and more.

In 2024, the 28 Housing Champion communities approved 2,643 housing units, or 45% of the total units approved statewide!

*Housing Trend Report: Dept. of Business & Economic Affairs*

### Strafford Co. Housing Champion Communities:

Dover, Farmington, Rochester, and Somersworth

### Strafford Co. Housing Champion Infrastructure Grants:

<b>DOVER</b> (Water Main Upgrade)	<b>ROCHESTER</b> (Water/Sewer Upgrades)	<b>TOTAL:</b>
<b>\$859,689</b>	<b>\$411,000</b>	<b>\$1,270,689</b>

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**HOME FOR ALL**

Home for All (HFA) is the region's backbone convener, comprised of more than 90 multisector organizations and community leaders working to ensure safe, stable, and affordable housing is within reach for all our Seacoast neighbors. Serving communities across York, Rockingham, and Strafford Counties, HFA aligns local efforts, data, and resources to prevent homelessness, strengthen housing stability, and expand diverse housing opportunities across the housing continuum, from emergency shelter to homes affordable for working families

[homeforall-seacoast.org](http://homeforall-seacoast.org)  
@homeforallseacoast

### Housing Action NH

Housing Action New Hampshire (HANH) is the state's leading housing advocacy organization. It is dedicated to advancing policies that increase housing supply, through regulatory reform and increased funding, and addressing homelessness. HANH convenes key stakeholders, provides technical assistance on housing-related legislation, and engages in public advocacy efforts to promote housing stability.

[housingactionnh.org](http://housingactionnh.org)