

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of RESOURCES and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
172 Pembroke Road P.O. Box 1856 Concord, New Hampshire 03302-1856

March 12, 2012

The Honorable Carol McGuire, Chairman
and the House Executive Departments and Administration Committee
NH Legislative Office Building, Room 306
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 1436 an act establishing a committee to oversee the management of natural resources by the department of resources and economic development.

Dear Chairman McGuire and Members of the Committee,

The Department of Resources and Economic Development wishes to offer our support for the amended version of HB 1436. The amended version clarifies the intent of the committee and addresses our concerns. We support the underlying concept of the bill where greater understanding and cooperation is developed between the legislature and the agency. We see this as an opportunity:

- ✓ For the legislature to understand more how the agency goes about carrying out current statutes;
- ✓ For the agency to understand the priorities of the legislature;
- ✓ To improve the statutes so we may better serve citizens, businesses and visitors;
- ✓ To address issues before they are presented as legislation; and
- ✓ To establish productive relationships and a new level of communication.

We have several comments regarding how the original legislation would be implemented. We believe that the amended version of the bill addresses these concerns:

- Please keep in mind that in addition to running the day to day operations, the agency has 20 statutorily created boards and commissions to participate in and staff.
- We would want to ensure consistency and limited overlap with the State Parks System Advisory Council which has the statutory charge of reviewing statutes and capital appropriations and making recommendation to the general court to improve the efficiency of the agency. There are five members of the legislature on this council.
- We are concerned with the additional time and cost that may be required by the agency to support the committee work, which according to the legislation includes, but is not limited to, analyzing programs, researching trends affecting costs and participation, and reviewing alternative approaches. We would hope that the way in which we address these topics in the Forest Resources Plan ("Forest Action Plan"), the 10-

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Year Strategic Development and Capital Improvement Plan, and with the State Forest Advisory Board and the State Parks System Advisory Council would also be suitable to the new committee.

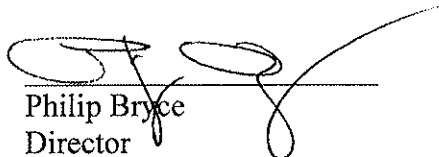
- The term oversight conjures up visions of getting ongoing approval by the committee to carry out the work of the agency resulting in delays in responding to implementing programs and projects and serving the public. We feel that there might be another term that would better reflect the relationship between the legislature and agency being sought after by this legislation.

Our only remaining question is if it is necessary for this committee to meet six times per year, at a minimum, given that a meeting can be held at the call of the chairman.

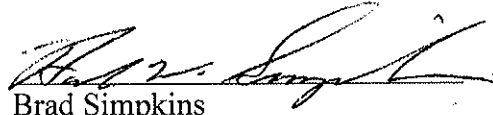
Again, we commend the intent of the bill and would welcome the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the legislature and agency so we can go about carrying out our joint responsibility of protecting our state's most precious resources and serving the state's citizens, businesses and visitors in the best possible way.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this legislation.

Sincerely,



Philip Bryce
Director
Division Parks and Recreation



Brad Simpkins
Interim Director
Division of Forests and Lands

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