



new hampshire  
**WOMEN'S FOUNDATION**

**To: Chairwoman Melanie Levesque and the Senate Election Law Committee**

**Re: Testimony in Support of House Bill 651**

**Date: April 24, 2019**

**Position: OUGHT TO PASS**

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation invests in equality and opportunity for women and girls through research, education, advocacy, and philanthropy. We are committed to help women advance in public leadership roles and we believe our elected governments should reflect the diversity of our communities, including parity in representation for women. In 2017 we launched the *Women Run!* candidate recruitment program, the Granite State's only nonpartisan program empowering and training women to run for office at the state and local level. At present, women hold 40% of the seats in the NH Senate and 34% of the seats in the NH House.

HB 651 Would Make It Possible For A More Diverse Generation of Candidates to Run for Office

Child care is one of the primary obstacles mothers of young children contend with when considering whether to run for public office. Child care, of course, is needed by men too. Yet studies<sup>1</sup> show that working mothers spend nearly twice as much time as working fathers do – 14 hours, compared with 8 – providing direct care for their children. In order to achieve state government representation that is reflective of the needs of families with children, our campaign finance and election policies need to keep up with the times.

HB 651 Would Align New Hampshire With Recent FEC Ruling on Funding Campaign-Related Child Care

On May 11, 2018 the Federal Election Commission (FEC) issued an [Advisory Opinion](#) declaring that campaign funds may be used for child care expenses that are incurred as a direct result of campaign activity<sup>2</sup>. This decision articulates a clear standard to ensure that child care may only be funded in this manner when candidates are performing campaign-related work or attending campaign-related events. In the year since this federal ruling Alabama, Wisconsin and Texas have all changed state laws to allow the same practice, several state election/ethics commissions have ruled child care an allowable expense and comparable legislation is pending in more than a dozen states in the current legislative session.

Conclusion

The New Hampshire Women's Foundation encourages your support for this bill and will be pleased to work further with Senators toward its enactment. Adopting HB 651 would help bring attention to the high costs of child care and evolve campaign finance laws that are currently based on outdated views of candidacy. We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and urge you to vote favorably on this proposal.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Frizzell

Director of Policy

[jennifer@nhwomensfoundation.org](mailto:jennifer@nhwomensfoundation.org), 603.340.1593

---

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, *Seven Facts About U.S. Moms*, Gretchen Livingston and Kirsten Bialik, May 10, 2018

<sup>2</sup> [FEC Allows Candidate for Congress to Use Campaign Funds for Child Care](#), The Hill, May 10, 2018