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Building a Better Budget Conference Will Provide Forum for Dialogue around State Budget Priorities

CONCORD, NH – New Hampshire faces significant fiscal challenges as it enters the 2016-2017 budget debates and policymakers will need to take a balanced approach in providing funding for services on which residents, visitors, and businesses rely. The New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute (NHFPI) will host *Building a Better Budget: Meeting Today's Needs, Preparing for Tomorrow* on January 23, 2015, to provide a forum for dialogue around how to build a budget that allows the state to create, maintain, and restore the public structures that are vital to a vibrant economy.

"State revenues have grown more slowly than the overall economy over the last two decades, leaving policymakers scrambling to keep up and creating an atmosphere of near constant crisis," said NHFPI Executive Director Jeff McLynch. "We hope this event opens a thoughtful dialogue around how the state sets priorities and how we can ensure that New Hampshire is a place where everyone has access to opportunities to thrive and prosper."

Two panel discussions featuring national and state policy experts will examine the state budget and the revenue system that supports state priorities. National panelists include Norton Francis, senior research associate, Urban Institute; Meg Wiehe, state tax policy director, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy; and Ife Floyd, family income support research associate, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. New Hampshire panelists include Christopher Clement, former commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Transportation; Amy Messer, legal director, Disability Rights Center; and Kristyn Van Ostern, associate vice chancellor and chief financial officer, Community College System of New Hampshire.

The luncheon keynote address will be presented by Anna Chu, director of the Middle-Out Economics project at the Center for American Progress. Ms. Chu will illustrate how a strong and stable middle class is the key driver of economic growth and outline strategies to help New Hampshire support its middle-class and increase economic opportunities for all Granite Staters.

Building a Better Budget will be held on Friday, January 23, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, NH. The event registration fee is \$45. Pre-registration is required via the NHFPI website; online registration is available through January 14. Complete details and links to register may be found at www.nhfpi.org/nhfpi-policy-conference.

The New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute is an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to exploring, developing, and promoting public policies that foster economic opportunity and prosperity for all New Hampshire residents, with an emphasis on low- and moderate-income families and individuals. Learn more at www.nhfpi.org.