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House Approved Budget Puts Vulnerable Citizens, State's Future at Risk

CONCORD, NH – The New Hampshire House of Representatives today approved its version of the FY 2016-2017 budget, which would provide nearly \$150 million less in General and Education Funds than the Governor's proposed budget for funding state needs over the biennium.

The New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute issued the following statement:

"The House budget pits vital public services against one another in an attempt to achieve a misguided sense of balance. This budget puts many of our state's most vulnerable residents at risk, forcing cities and towns – and local taxpayers – to take on greater responsibilities and to face higher costs in the long run," said New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute Executive Director Jeff McLynch.

"The fact remains that New Hampshire's revenue system has not fully recovered since the start of the recession. Rather than exploring modest, sensible options to increase available revenue, the House has once again resorted to short-term fixes that threaten the state's long-term success. Raiding the Renewable Energy Fund and draining the Rainy Day Fund is neither sound fiscal policy nor an effective way to win the trust of citizens and businesses."

"Leaving hundreds of millions in federal dollars on the table, including more than \$200 million for the New Hampshire Health Protection Program, will put citizens at risk and push the state further behind," added McLynch. "Failure to reauthorize the New Hampshire Health Protection Program will deny 37,000 citizens access to affordable health coverage, coverage that improves health outcomes, reduces costs in other areas of the budget, and lowers uncompensated care costs."

"This budget forces false choices. We do not have to choose among a safe transportation system, affordable higher education, and vital human services. If the state is to attract new residents and new businesses and do right by those that are already here, then we need to invest in a strong, healthy New Hampshire that offers a high quality of life for everyone."

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.