



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

February 27, 2020

The Honorable Donna Soucy
President
New Hampshire State Senate

The Honorable Martha Fuller Clark
Senator
New Hampshire State Senate

Dear Senate President Soucy and Senator Fuller Clark,

As a strong supporter of the Land Conservation Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). I have recently visited several of the projects that have benefitted from the program and I am committed to doing more to expand this important program.

Recently, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee took positive action on Senate Bill 493. This bill is the same as Senate Bill 74 that failed to become law last year. As I said at the time, LCHIP is a great program that continues to benefit local communities across the state. However, as constructed, SB74 and SB493 represent an additional tax on the recording of all deeds, mortgages, mortgage discharges, and plans. This has the effect of raising costs on homebuyers and is not a concept that I can support.

In a spirit of compromise, I asked Senator David Starr to sponsor Senate Bill 617. This provided for a voluntary option to donate to LCHIP. This would have provided LCHIP with additional support without a mandatory tax. Unfortunately, the State Senate killed this proposal.

However, as part of my ongoing effort to support LCHIP, my administration has worked closely with the New Hampshire Nature Conservancy on a new proposal. I could support a supplemental appropriation for LCHIP in the next state budget cycle for an additional \$250,000 per year of the biennium. This represents a significant investment into LCHIP, allowing them to expand the wonderful work they do and is a commitment that I am willing to make in constructing the next state budget. Further, as we move forward into the budgeting process and have a more clear view of state revenues and spending priorities I could envision additional funding being allocated.

Please consider this proposal as a way for us to mutually support LCHIP in a manner that is agreeable to environmental groups and the thousands of people who support this great program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu
Governor