

DRAFT 01.17.25
NEW HAMPSHIRE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS NETWORK
BY ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

January [], 2025

Representative Glenn Cordelli, Chair
Education Policy and Administration Committee
New Hampshire State House
107 N. State St.
Concord, NH 03301

RE: Opposition to HB 71-FN – An Act Prohibiting the Use of the Facilities of a Public Elementary School, or an Institution of Higher Learning to Provide Shelter for Aliens Who Have Not Been Admitted into the United States

Dear Representative Cordelli and Members of the Education Policy and Administration Committee:

We are submitting this letter on behalf of the NH Immigrant Rights Network (NHIRN), a coalition of New Hampshire organizations and individuals working with and within immigrant communities to improve lives and ensure just treatment. We are **opposed** to HB 71-FN and we urge the members to vote it “inexpedient to legislate.”

This bill seeks to prohibit the use of schools to shelter migrants who “have not been admitted to the United States.” It is directly modeled on the failed “Schools Not Shelters” legislation introduced in the both Houses of Congress during the 2023 – 2024 legislative season.¹ It is based on anti-immigrant sentiment and it is telling that the federal legislation was championed by the anti-immigrant Federation for American Immigration Reform.² The Congressional legislation came in the wake of the cruel stunts by the Governor of Texas and others to send newly arrived migrants to jurisdictions with “right to shelter” policies or laws such as New York City, Chicago and Massachusetts.³ New Hampshire is not such a jurisdiction and though it has faced challenges caring for unhoused people throughout the state, it is not due to an influx of people, U.S. citizens or otherwise, from other states.

There is no need for such a law in New Hampshire. Our public schools are not routinely used as civic emergency spaces, much less to shelter unhoused people. However, decisions about what

¹See, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/3941/text>. See also, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/2983/text>.

² See, <https://www.fairus.org/press-release/fair-applauds-house-passage-hr-3941-schools-not-shelters-act>.

³ Explainer: *Governors Transporting Migrants to Other States*, National Immigration Forum (Oct. 7, 2022) at <https://immigrationforum.org/article/explainer-governors-transporting-migrants-to-other-states/>.

facilities should be used and under what circumstances should be left to local and municipal governments.

This legislation is unnecessary and it addresses a nonexistent issue that has little likelihood of ever arising in our state. What it does do though, is to unjustly contribute, inadvertently or not, to the growing body of misinformation and fearmongering about immigrants. Building animus against a group of fellow New Hampshire residents has consequences for that group and is a true public safety concern.

For these reasons, we ask that Committee members vote this bill “inexpedient to legislate.”

Sincerely,