



State of New Hampshire
Governor's Office
FOR
EMERGENCY RELIEF AND RECOVERY
(GOFERR)
LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020

1:00 p.m.

in

One Eagle Square

Concord, NH 03301

Legislative Advisory Board Members:

SENATOR	Senator Lou D'Allesandro
SENATE PRESIDENT	Donna Soucy
SENATE LEADER	Senator Chuck Morse
SENATOR	John Reagan
SPEAKER	Steve Shurtleff
HOUSE LEADER	Rep. Dick Hinch
CHAIRWOMAN	Maryjane Wallner
REPRESENTATIVE	Erin Hennessey

AGENDA

- Call to Order - Reading of Public Meeting Statement
- Attendance
- Presentations:
- Educations Presentations:
- Follow Up Discussions
- Next Scheduled Meeting
- Adjourn

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 * * * * *

3 JERRY LITTLE: The GOFERR Legislative
4 Advisory was created by Executive Order #2020-06. That
5 order is publicly available on the Governor's website.

6 Today's meeting is an official meeting of the
7 Board. It is open to the public and will be run in a manner
8 compliant with RSA 91-A.

9 Today's meeting is being recorded. Should you be
10 a speaking participant and not wish to be recorded, you may
11 disconnect now or at any other time. The recording from
12 today's meeting will be transcribed and posted on the GOFERR
13 webpage.

14 My name is Jerry Little. I am Director of the
15 Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery, and I
16 will be facilitating today's meeting.

17 Because the Board is meeting by phone, under RSA
18 91-A, there are a few initial logistics that we need to
19 establish. First, each of us must state our names, where we
20 are located, and who is with us in the room. We will do
21 that by roll call, like this:

22 I am Jerry Little, Director of the GOFERR in

1 GOFERR's office at One Eagle Square in Concord, New
2 Hampshire. In the room with me are Kate Giaquinto
3 (phonetic) Nancy Smith, and Lisa English.

4 Senate President Donna Soucy, are you with us?

5 DONNA SOUCY: Yes, good afternoon. This is Donna
6 Soucy. I am at my home in Manchester, and I am alone.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Senator.

8 House Speaker Steve Shurtleff?

9 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yes, I'm on the call and I am in
10 the Speaker's Office at the State House, and I am alone.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, sir. Senate Republican
12 Leader Chuck Morse?

13 CHUCK MORSE: This is Chuck Morse. I'm in my
14 office in Atkinson, and I am alone.

15 JERRY LITTLE: House Republican Leader Dick Hinch?

16 DICK HINCH: This is Dick Hinch. I am in my
17 office in Merrimac, and I am alone.

18 JERRY LITTLE: Chairman Senator Lou D'Allesandro?

19 LOU D'ALLESSANDRO: I'm Lou D'Allesandro, and I'm
20 in Manchester in my home, and I'm by myself.

21 LOU D'ALLESSANDRO: Chairwoman Representative
22 Maryjane Wallner?

1 MARYJANE WALLNER: Maryjane Wallner. I'm at home
2 in Concord, New Hampshire, and I'm alone.

3 JERRY LITTLE: Senator John Reagan?

4 JOHN REAGAN: John Reagan, I'm in my office by
5 myself.

6 JERRY LITTLE: And Representative Erin Hennessey?

7 ERIN HENNESSEY: Erin Hennessey. I'm in
8 Littleton, and my daughter is in the room.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you all very much. As we
10 move through our agenda today, each Board member and anyone
11 else speaking is asked to identify themselves before
12 speaking. Should you choose to take any votes today, they
13 must be done by roll call, following the process we just
14 used.

15 Finally, before we begin today's presentations,
16 please remember to use 5* if you would like to ask a
17 question.

18 In addition, presenters are asked to also hit 5*
19 when their turn comes up, as that allows us to identify your
20 and unmute it your line.

21 The last time we met was on Wednesday July 29,
22 2020, and you asked to hear presentations from the New

1 Hampshire Snowmobile Association about the challenges they
2 are facing due to COVID-19, along with reports from the New
3 Hampshire School Administrators Association, New Hampshire
4 Charter Schools, NEA-New Hampshire and New Hampshire School
5 Nurse to discuss COVID-related costs in terms of remote
6 learning and school reopening.

7 Because of the school presentations, the
8 Department of Education Commissioner Edelblut has been asked
9 to join us today as well.

10 Lastly, there was a request from a committee
11 member to have Health and Human Services Commissioner Laurie
12 Shibinette join us to discuss the availability of COVID-19
13 testing equipment for schools.

14 Our first presentation is from the New Hampshire
15 Snowmobile Association, and I believe Executive Director Dan
16 Gould is on the Line. And he's also joined I believe by
17 Chris Gamache, Chief of the Bureau of Trails at Dancer, and
18 past President of New Hampshire Snowmobile Association,
19 Terry Callum.

20 And one quick note, somebody's line is open
21 unmuted and making a bit of noise. So if people could
22 kindly mute their lines when they are not speaking? Mr.

1 Gould, are you on the line?

2 DAN GOULD: Yes, I'm at the NHSA office.

3 JERRY LITTLE: Perfect.

4 DAN GOULD: Yes, I'm at the NHSA office in Tilton.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Excellent, thank you. And Chris

6 Gamache, are you with us?

7 CHRIS GAMACHE: Yes, Chris Gamache is here at the

8 Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Okay. And I think maybe Terry
10 Callum also?

11 TERRY CALLUM: Yes sir, Terry Callum is here.

12 JERRY LITTLE: Perfect, wonderful. So we have all
13 three speakers from the Snow Machine Association. Why don't
14 you go ahead with your presentation to explain to the
15 Legislative Advisory Board how COVID-19 is impacting your
16 clubs and what you do for New Hampshire?

17 DAN GOULD: Sure, thank you very much. This is
18 Dan Gould, and I'll start off -- I want to thank you for
19 having us on this call. Obviously, it's not a position that
20 we want to be in, but unfortunately the clubs are truly in a
21 bind. There's 101 clubs in the Snowmobile Association of
22 New Hampshire, and as you read in our testimony that we

1 handed in, snowmobiling is a \$585 million-dollar economic
2 driver in the state. Registrations typically exceed \$42,000
3 annually. I'm sure everyone has seen the pickup trucks and
4 trailers heading north in the winter, not to mention all the
5 snowmobilers in the communities who are riding around once
6 the snow files.

7 What's truly hard to believe about this sector of
8 the tourism industry is that it depends so heavily on club
9 volunteers who maintain the 7000 miles of trail. And this
10 leads us to the position we're in now. The clubs depend
11 heavily on fundraising to pay for trail projects and
12 grooming. They volunteer their time, but they need the
13 resources to carry out their mission.

14 And, as everyone knows, the NHSA grass drags were
15 canceled this year, and this is the single most important
16 fundraiser for many of the clubs. Losses from this event,
17 just to the clubs, exceed \$120,000. And the NHSA's
18 Association lost another \$100,000.

19 But we're not here about the NHSA today, we're
20 here to talk specifically about the clubs. We recently sent
21 out a survey to the clubs. We had 30 percent respond to
22 date, and we asked them about their overall fundraising

1 losses, and right now they stand at \$220,000.

2 And considering that the majority of the clubs
3 haven't even had their first meeting yet, and that many more
4 fundraising opportunities will certainly be canceled, it's a
5 given that these losses will mount.

6 And that said, there is growing concern among the
7 clubs that they'll be forced to drastically reduce trail
8 maintenance, which leads to frustrated snowmobilers who may
9 search for other destinations to ride other than New
10 Hampshire, and that would be a horrible loss.

11 And if any of these clubs were to close shop,
12 temporarily or permanently because of funding, it has a
13 rippling effect statewide, as our interconnected trail
14 becomes fractured.

15 The proposal we have is a one-time request, due to
16 unforeseen circumstances brought on by COVID. Healthy clubs
17 are needed to continue the economic benefits to tourism.

18 The request that we put forward is quantifiable,
19 meaningful and incorporates state oversight, which the clubs
20 are familiar with.

21 The NHSA has been working on behalf of the clubs
22 with Chief Gamache to come up with three meaningful funding

1 requests to help the clubs. He can certainly provide
2 details to what is within our written testimony.

3 Again, I want to thank you for your time, and we
4 appreciate your consideration.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much. Who would
6 speak next for your group, is that Mr. Gamache?

7 DAN GOULD: Yes.

8 CHRIS GAMACHE: So Director Little, members of the
9 committee -- again, my name is Chris Gamache and I am the
10 Chief Supervisor of the Bureau of Trails in the Department
11 of Natural and Cultural Resources.

12 As Director Gould outlined, coming up into this
13 winter season discussing and working with the snowmobile
14 clubs, you know, what they are facing due to COVID-19 and
15 the loss of fundraising activities, you know, that they've
16 encountered, almost all of their events have been canceled
17 through the season and we anticipate anything scheduled for
18 the fall will probably be canceled as well.

19 Quick history, or kind of writeup on how we fund
20 the clubs as the state. Snowmobilers buy a resignation
21 decal on an annual basis from the Fish and Game Department.
22 About 60 percent of that revenue comes to our office, and

1 the majority of that funding we turn back to the volunteer
2 clubs in the form of grants through our grant and aid
3 program, many of you are familiar with from Fiscal Committee
4 Joe Carr and other legislative committees of these funds.

5 Our administrative rules stipulate that we
6 reimburse a portion of expenses for snowmobile trails in the
7 state. Winter grooming being the largest expense, we
8 typically award about a million and a half dollars every
9 winter to maintain New Hampshire snowmobile's system.

10 We reimburse 70 percent of the hourly cost to run
11 those machines. Clubs are anticipated and expected to raise
12 30 percent of all matched funding.

13 Right now, it appears that they will not be able
14 to raise a lot of those match funds, and certainly the
15 concern will be that they simply will not be able to afford
16 to run snow groomers, and if we have good snow and a good
17 winter, we're going to have unmaintained trails, riders not
18 registering here in the state, and that has a huge impact to
19 rooms and meals, local businesses, gas tax, et cetera.

20 So, you know, the concern is for their -- for what
21 funding they can't come up with that we currently don't
22 provide to them. Any of these trails that are closed

1 because a club basically goes defunct, we do not have the
2 ability to take on. And as Dan said, this is an
3 interconnected trail system, so the loss of one area affects
4 the region.

5 So the ideas that the Snowmobile Association had
6 come up with and they brought to me for consideration were
7 looking at three different potentials that would be the
8 greatest impact to clubs.

9 One was coming up with funds to pay for their
10 required insurance. All clubs are required by our grant
11 rules to ensure all their groomers. They typically have
12 liability policies as non-profits, and that is probably one
13 of the largest expenses for their fundraising activities,
14 that they may not be able to come up. That was a total cost
15 of \$270,322.

16 Groomer participation and repairs: The idea was
17 we know that they have track belts that have to be replaced.
18 Other maintenance items, some of it comes from a grant, but
19 a lot of it is fundraising.

20 The thought was about \$154,000 worth of preseason
21 preparation and maintenance on 365 grooming machines here in
22 the state of New Hampshire that would need to be performed.

1 And then about \$150,000 in prepaid diesel
2 contracts -- clubs that buy, you know, thousands of dollars'
3 worth of diesel to start the season. We are a reimbursement
4 grant program; the clubs have to incur the cost, and then
5 they bill us to reimburse them. So most of them don't have
6 the money to buy fuel to start the season.

7 Knowing that all of these funds have to be spent
8 by December 31, the thought was all of these could actually
9 be accounted for in that time frame, and the Snowmobile
10 Association approached us about potentially having us
11 provide the oversight and management of the funds, basically
12 as an addendum to our grant made program.

13 We would seek emergency -- an Executive Order to
14 do a quick, one-time modification of our administrative
15 rules to accommodate this, and try and pull off the upcoming
16 winter season.

17 That's kind of my part in a quick nutshell but --
18 you know, we do reimburse clubs, but it's only a portion of
19 their costs to run this industry. You know, in a good
20 winter the economic benefits to the state are pretty similar
21 to alpine skiing, yet this industry is being run by
22 volunteers.

1 So this current COVID impact from their
2 fundraising is having a significant impact on them and being
3 able to open this coming winter.

4 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much. Is there
5 anything else you'd like to say from the Association before
6 we open the floor for questions from the Board?

7 CHRIS GAMACHE: I believe Terry Callum is going to
8 just give you the club perspective. I can give you the
9 state, Dan can give you the statewide, but Terry really is
10 on the ground with club impacts.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. Mr. Callum?

12 TERRY CALLUM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you
13 hear me okay?

14 JERRY LITTLE: Yes, thank you. We're hearing you
15 fine.

16 TERRY CALLUM: Yes. I am Terry Callum. I am a
17 past President of the New Hampshire Snowmobile Association.
18 I am presently a Director on the Board for the Association
19 representing Sullivan County, which represents nine local
20 clubs. And I am also President of my local club, and I've
21 been a volunteer for the sport since 1988.

22 Basically, the perspective from local clubs is

1 that we're really the state's way to produce this product.
2 I think Mr. Gamache and Mr. Gould both referred to that, but
3 that is the situation. We are the people on the ground that
4 make the product happen.

5 In my own area, our clubs are generally small. We
6 come from mostly a rural population, and there is pretty
7 limited business support. And that's not unusual in other
8 communities in other areas, but it's certainly the case
9 where I come from.

10 But in our county, there are snowmobile trails in
11 every single town and in the one city in our county. But
12 the grants that we receive and the membership dues that
13 happen from club members, they just really don't pay all the
14 bills. We have to fundraise to get the rest of it done.

15 You know, the things that we use fundraising for
16 is 1) to -- you know, certainly as Mr. Gamache said -- match
17 any grants that we might receive on equipment or
18 construction. But we really need that fundraising also to
19 perform all the equipment maintenance that happens -- you
20 know, in the offseason or even in season on repairs and
21 such.

22 Fundraising also allows us to purchase supplies

1 and equipment that couldn't possibly be covered by a grant,
2 such as purchasing chainsaws or pull saws, or having those
3 items repaired at a shop.

4 And then the other thing that we use fundraising
5 for that is extremely common is the clubs oftentimes have to
6 tackle projects that were completely unplanned. There was
7 no time to acquire a grant, work needs to happen, and the
8 club in that case may have to fund the entire project. That
9 might include excavation or bridge building or other items.

10 So fundraising is very much at the heart of the
11 other half of the work that we have to do here.

12 During the off-season that is our premier time to
13 fundraise, whether it's spring, summer or fall. And this
14 year, those things in most cases simply could not happen.

15 As an example, my own club that I'm President of:
16 This year we could not -- we park cars at festivals and do
17 trash details at fairs and barbecues at Old Home Days and
18 things like that, and we're now at \$7,000 we have not raised
19 this year that we have raised for the last 10 years each and
20 every year. It ebbs and flows a little bit, but it's pretty
21 close to \$7000 a year that we raised, and we have raised \$0
22 this year.

1 The -- we have nine clubs in our county, as I
2 stated. Just dg a sample of roughly 30 percent of those,
3 three of the clubs are between \$15,000 and \$20,000 in
4 totality of fundraising that hasn't happened this year. And
5 that will have real impacts.

6 As an example, just two years ago my own club
7 spent over \$5000 in November and December doing some major
8 repairs on our groomer to prepare for the winter. That work
9 lasted longer than that season, because last year we only
10 had to spend \$1500 in readiness funds to get that working.
11 But there's again an ebb and flow on that; years of more
12 spend and years of less spend.

13 But we have to get those dollars in play on our
14 side of the equation, to be able to be ready to produce this
15 product. Basically, our grooming equipment around the state
16 runs on diesel, gas and parts, along with service. And
17 that's also known as cash.

18 In terms of my area, you know, we'll find a way
19 forward, but this would make a big difference in moving us
20 forward with a one-time piece of help.

21 Thank you.

22 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much. Appreciate

1 that. Just quickly before I open it to the members of the
2 Board: Mr. Gould, thank you for the materials that you
3 submitted to the LAB. Could you clarify what the ask of
4 GOFER is that is being made by New Hampshire Snowmobile
5 Association?

6 I notice that on page 2 under, "COVID impacts" you
7 note that you're looking at a fundraising loss -- revenue
8 loss of about \$220,000, but under, "Potential solutions" you
9 outline insurance coverage of \$270,000; Grooming Represent
10 at \$154 -; Prepaid Fuel Contracts \$150,000 and I'm not
11 really sure exactly what the dollar figure is that you're
12 requesting.

13 DAN GOULD: So the total dollar figure is \$574,622
14 are those three amounts added up. And the \$220- that we're
15 reporting right now is to date what we know from 30 percent
16 of our clubs. And based on some projections, we're looking
17 at -- you know, double and triple that \$220,000. It could
18 easily happen.

19 JERRY LITTLE: So \$220,000 is your nonrevenue loss
20 at this point in time, and you're anticipating that by the
21 time snow flies it'll be two to three times that much?

22 DAN GOULD: That is correct.

1 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much. Questions
2 from members of the Legislative Advisory Board for either
3 Mr. Gould, Mr. Callum or Mr. Gamache? Senator Morse, I see
4 you have your hand up, sir?

5 SENATOR MORSE: Yes, sir. I actually have
6 questions of you that I should have asked before we started
7 this presentation. I have actually three of them. One is,
8 can you tell our group what the current fund balance is?

9 JERRY LITTLE: So it appears that we've got about
10 \$230 millionish in unallocated funds remaining of the \$1.25
11 billion of GOFER funds at this point in time, which is
12 essentially the same. There have been a few small
13 allocations since last time the LAB met, but that's about
14 the right number -- of unallocated funds.

15 SENATOR MORSE: Okay, now, you said \$230 million?

16 JERRY LITTLE: About \$230 million, yes.

17 SENATOR MORSE: And is there some expectation that
18 we don't go below the \$200 million?

19 JERRY LITTLE: Yes. As we -- as the LAB
20 recommended to the Governor, and as the Governor has agreed
21 to, the plan still remains to hold about \$200 million
22 dollars in abeyance until September or October in

1 anticipation of the potential for a COVID spike, or some
2 other currently unknown needs that might come up.

3 So at this point in time, we're still holding as
4 the LAB and the Stakeholders Advisory Board both recommend
5 to the Governor that we hold \$200 million dollars in
6 reserve.

7 SENATOR MORSE: All right. And my third question
8 is really a two-parter, but let's start with have any of
9 these clubs, you know, applied to any of the funds that
10 exist already?

11 JERRY LITTLE: Yes, they have. Several funds have
12 -- several groups have applied in several funds. I was not
13 able to -- didn't have the time this morning to see if I
14 could drag up that number about how many applied in which of
15 the funds, but we do see them in several of the funds --
16 both the non-profit fund and I believe we also saw some
17 within the GAP Fund.

18 SENATOR MORSE: Can any on the -- that did the
19 presentation answer that?

20 DAN GOULD: This is Dan Gould. I can comment that
21 the NHSA has put in the GAP Fund grant proposal for \$105,000
22 and that is strictly for the Association, because we cannot

1 take out a grant through the GAP Fund for the clubs. I
2 know of two clubs that have taken out GAP Funds also, but
3 beyond that I don't know of any others.

4 SENATOR MORSE: Thank you. Jerry, one of the
5 other questions that keeps coming up -- and I'm sure someone
6 else will bring it up today, but have all these accounts
7 been audited in case there's any balances that we can use?

8 JERRY LITTLE: Not yet, but that is one of the
9 activities that is on our -- coming up soon in the next
10 phase of operation of GOFERR chores to do is to get back in
11 touch with the recipients with funds in all of the programs,
12 and find out what they're actually going to use of the
13 amounts they were granted.

14 We think that there's a strong possibility that we
15 may have overallocated initially, when we look at balances,
16 which we try to track on a regular basis, the amount of
17 money that has been allocated to a fund and what has been
18 expensed, we can see that there's still a lot of money left
19 over. We're not sure that we got the number right exactly.

20 And so, we will be looking in excess funds and
21 accounts, with the possibility of dragging some of it back
22 into the GOFERR account generally. So yes, there will be --

1 we're anticipating that there will be extra monies that will
2 go unused as the funds start to wind down and we try to
3 bring that back in so we can reallocate them for other uses.

4 SENATOR MORSE: Thank you, I'm all set.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Senator Morse.

6 Representative Maryjane Wallner?

7 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you, Director Little.

8 Actually, my questions are in the same area that Senator
9 Morse was just talking about.

10 As I was looking online at some of the data, it
11 did seem that you had a number of accounts that were not
12 drawing down. And I wondered when we're going to sort of
13 have that information about how much might be left in some
14 of these accounts, and whether or not there are hurdles that
15 are making it difficult to get the funding out?

16 It seems like in some funds, there may be some
17 restrictions in the applications, or in the actual being
18 able to get those funds out, and I'm wondering when you
19 think we'll have that kind of information?

20 JERRY LITTLE: So many of the funds that have been
21 set up are really just getting rolling now. If you look at
22 some of the bigger funds, the grants are just going out.

1 And, you know, it's a little bit early for us to really try
2 to put a solid number behind that. I really think it's
3 going to be an early fall exercise at the GOFERR office. I
4 don't think people will be able to tell us exactly how many
5 potential clients that would apply the monies in certain
6 funds have been in.

7 So it's going to be -- you know, another month or
8 so before we're going to probably start to work on that
9 project and be able to tell you exactly what it is. I do
10 believe that in some of the funds there have been some
11 hurdles.

12 There had been some difficulty reaching people
13 within the municipal and county program, which was a big
14 flush of cash and it went out very, very early.

15 And for the past several weeks, we've been doing a
16 significant amount of outreach to dozens of municipalities
17 that haven't even sent in a grant yet to acknowledge that
18 we've got tens of thousands of dollars sitting here with
19 their name on it. So we're still working on that.

20 The programs that went out more recently, I think
21 we're planning on having a conversation later on this
22 afternoon about some housing related programs and some

1 hurdles that were identified and have been addressed
2 relative to getting those applications in.

3 So I think, long answer Representative Waller I
4 apologize for that, but I think it's a combination of thing,
5 and hopefully early fall we'll have a better handle on how
6 much we may have overallocated to certain programs.

7 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you, Director Little, I
8 appreciate that.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hennessey, do you
10 have a question?

11 ERIN HENNESSEY: Yes, thank you, Director Little.
12 My first question is for you. I would like to know what the
13 timing of the Gap payments is for the grant applications?

14 JERRY LITTLE: The Business Finance Authority
15 completed their review of the hundreds of applications that
16 went into the GAP program at the end of the last week. The
17 determinations were sent to the GOFERR office late in the
18 day on Monday.

19 We have begun our review, and efforts to package
20 the recommendations in a manner that we can send those to
21 the Governor for his consideration, there are a few other
22 chores and tasks that we have to get done before that can

1 happen.

2 We're hoping to have the -- at least a draft of
3 the recommendations to the Governor's staff by the end of
4 this week, and hopefully we will know something by the end
5 of next, which is in keeping with how the other programs has
6 a very operated.

7 Generally between when the entity this has
8 accepted the applications and processed them and made the
9 initial recommendations and when we finally get the grant
10 announced it's been about two weeks.

11 It just takes us that long to scrub everything, to
12 verify things, to ask follow up questions, to get responses
13 to those questions, and to get a level of comfort to the
14 Governor and his staff to be able to give us the go ahead.

15 ERIN HENNESSEY: Thank you. And then this
16 question is for Mr. Gould. Is there a chance if some of
17 these clubs do receive GAP Funding that have applied for it,
18 that your ask would be any lower? Or is this the minimum
19 ask, independent of what happens with the GAP Funding?

20 DAN GOULD: So it's my understanding that you
21 cannot receive funding twice out of any of these monies --
22 CARES Act monies. So it would be if they were successful in

1 receiving funding from another program, we would -- you
2 know, deduct that amount from this request... For instance
3 the insurance, if a club got money for prepaid fuel, it
4 would but same, we'd deduct that amount.

5 ERIN HENNESSEY: Okay.

6 DAN GOULD: Certainly willing to work with those
7 who are managing it.

8 ERIN HENNESSEY: Okay. So Director Little, if
9 it's okay with you, I would like to propose that we take up
10 this request at our next meeting, if it's within the next
11 month, so that we could get funding out to the club as soon
12 as possible, but also not complicate things in case their
13 GAP Funds are approved? I think we should know if they've
14 received GAP payments by the time we meet next, is that
15 correct?

16 JERRY LITTLE: Yes. We should know by then. I
17 understand that --

18 ERIN HENNESSEY: Okay.

19 JERRY LITTLE: -- the orders of your questions now
20 make sense to me Representative, thank you. We have a
21 couple more questions for members of the Committee. If it's
22 okay with you, Representative Hennessey, we'll take those

1 questions, and then I'll --

2 ERIN HENNESSEY: Sure.

3 JERRY LITTLE: -- circle back to you and ask the
4 direction on which you'd like the minutes to show on this?
5 So Senator D'Allesandro?

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you, Director Little.
7 Just following up on Senator Morse's request, I think it's
8 incumbent upon us to know what the unexpended dollars that
9 have been allocated, what amount is available, because if
10 you're talking about retaining \$200 million, you're getting
11 close to that number at this point in time.

12 And I believe that there is some fairly
13 significant ask that will be forthcoming, and some of those
14 asks could be contained in monies that haven't been spent
15 and carried forward. So I think that number is essential.

16 And indeed, as I've been following the dollars
17 that have been expended, it appears to me -- again, from my
18 numbers -- that we have allocated about a billion dollars of
19 the money, and that it looks like of that the \$250- that we
20 haven't expended, there's about \$615- that hasn't been
21 expended from the money that's been allocated, or \$325-
22 which would give us a \$615 number. If that's if at least

1 [00:34:05 audio unclear one time, and with it if] date as
2 when this money has to be spent, it's really incumbent that
3 those numbers be verified, as we take requests moving
4 forward. Otherwise, that expended money is returned to the
5 federal government, am I correct in that assumption?

6 JERRY LITTLE: You are correct, sir.

7 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Okay. So, again, referring
8 to Senator Morse's request, that balanced figure becomes an
9 imperative in the decision-making process.

10 And we've got a couple of things on our agenda
11 today having to do with the opening of schools K-12 and the
12 expenditures that are being made by those entities that are
13 COVID related, that really need -- they need a great deal of
14 help in order to make all of that happen, because some of
15 them are going back totally virtually, some are using a
16 hybrid method, and those funds are being expended as we
17 speak.

18 So knowing the numbers I think is an imperative.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 JERRY LITTLE: You're welcome, Senator. Speaker
21 Shurtleff, sir, question?

22 STEVE SHURTLEFF: I thought Representative

1 Hennessey was making a motion to table this request to our
2 next meeting, and I was going to second it, so I have no
3 questions.

4 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much. I believe
5 we've gone through the questions. One more second. If
6 anybody has thought of anything else relative to the Snow
7 Machine Association request? I'm not seeing -- Mr. Gould,
8 do you have a question you'd like to ask?

9 DAN GOULD: I don't. I want to thank you,
10 Director, for your time and everybody else. I think unless
11 anyone else has a question, we're done.

12 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, sir. Representative
13 Hennessey, back to you for your request or your direction to
14 us.

15 ERIN HENNESSEY: Yes, and thank you Speaker
16 Shurtleff for reorganizing my statement. Yes, I would like
17 to table this request to our next meeting.

18 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. Would you like me to
19 take a roll call vote on that?

20 ERIN HENNESSEY: I don't know if that -- Senator
21 Morse?

22 JERRY LITTLE: Has there been a motion?

1 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Hasn't been seconded.

2 JERRY LITTLE: Speaker Shurtleff seconded it, so
3 we'll need to take a roll call. On the motion to table
4 until the next meeting? Are you ready for the roll call?
5 Senate President Soucy?

6 DONNA SOUCY: Yes.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Speaker Shurtleff?

8 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yes.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Morse?

10 SENATOR MORSE: Yes.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hinch?

12 DICK HINCH: Yes.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Senator D'Allesandro?

14 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes, I'm here. Are we
15 taking the vote?

16 JERRY LITTLE: Yes, we're taking the vote on
17 Representative Hennessey's motion to table the Snow Machine
18 Association request until the next meeting, so we can plan
19 out how things work out in their application to the GAP Fund
20 and the applications of other snow machine clubs to the
21 other funds.

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you. My vote is yes.

1 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, sir. Representative
2 Wallner?

3 MARY JANE WALLNER: Yes.

4 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Reagan?

5 SENATOR REAGAN: Reagan yes.

6 JERRY LITTLE: And Representative Hennessey?

7 ERIN HENNESSEY: Hennessey yes.

8 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. So we will table the
9 Snow Machine Association issue until the next -- and bring
10 it back up for reconsideration at the next meeting.

11 The next item on our agenda -- we're moving into
12 presentations relative to education in the state of New
13 Hampshire. We have several at the request of several
14 different members of the Committee.

15 We're going to start with Executive Director of
16 the New Hampshire School Administrators Association, Dr.
17 Carl Ladd. Dr. Ladd, are you on the phone for this? We see
18 you.

19 CARL LADD: Thank you.

20 JERRY LITTLE: What would you like us to know?
21 Senator D'Allesandro? Just for a second, please, Dr. Ladd -
22 - sorry to interrupt. Senator D'Allesandro, I think -- I

1 believe most of these presentations are at your request,
2 sir. Would you like to give us an introduction to this
3 segment?

4 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Oh, thank you very much,
5 Mr. Chairman. Yes, I've asked for these presentations.
6 School openings K-12 are taking place early in September,
7 and each and every one of our school districts is really
8 doing it at their own pace and under their own direction.

9 And I think it's important for us to recognize
10 from the Administrator's Association the costs associated
11 with these either virtual, all virtual, hybrid, or different
12 methodologies by which the supervisory units are going to
13 open up.

14 I represent the largest school district in the
15 state -- Manchester. There are about 13,000 plus students
16 in Manchester and about 7000 in Goffstown. So combine that,
17 you get 20,000 students.

18 I think we should all be fully cognizant of the
19 fact that technology is going to play a significant role,
20 and that technology has a cost associated with it.

21 Many of these schools are backordering
22 technological equipment which they need in order to carry

1 forward. So I thought it would be -- again -- very
2 important for us to know what's going on around the state,
3 and what better way to find that out then through the School
4 Administrators Association, as the administrators I think
5 are talking to one another and discussing plans and how to
6 get school going again for K-12.

7 And, you know, K-2 there's some thoughts about how
8 to do that middle school and high school. So all of these
9 factors have a cost associated with it.

10 But I think the most significant thing is we want
11 education to be performed in a quality manner. We want to
12 be able to verify that this education is taking place. We
13 want to be able to track these students to make sure that
14 they're part and parcel of the process and not dropping out
15 of the process.

16 And that's why I thought that we should have
17 people from the Administrators Association. We need the
18 charter schools to talk about their situation, and we need
19 the teachers.

20 So I hope, Chairman, that's a fairly quick
21 summation off why I wanted these items on the agenda. I'm a
22 former schoolteacher, I know what it's like to be in the

1 classroom. I've been away a while, so the virtual learning
2 is very much a new -- it's a new amenity to me.

3 And I think all of us are very concerned about the
4 education of our young people, the quality of that
5 education, and the first thing that education is being
6 delivered in the best possible manner, given this most
7 unbelievable situation.

8 So I'll close with that, Chairman Little, and if
9 there's any queries of me before, I'd be most happy to
10 address them.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much, Senator
12 D'Allesandro. Dr. Ladd, are you prepared to speak with us
13 now? Sorry for the interruptions. We're ready to hear from
14 you, sir.

15 CARL LADD: Great. Thank you. Good afternoon.
16 My name is Carl Ladd, the Executive Director of the New
17 Hampshire School Administrators Association. I'd like to
18 thank Director Little and Committee members for inviting me
19 to talk with you today about the fiscal impact of COVID-19
20 on remote learning and the reopening of our school buildings

21 For today's discussion, I'd like to focus on some
22 of the top fiscal impact areas that districts are grappling

1 with right now, which shouldn't be considered exhaustive,
2 but are all components of school reopening plans across the
3 state. These major areas are health and safety, facilities
4 and operations, staffing and professional development,
5 special education, technology and transportation.

6 When school districts developed their budgets for
7 2020 and 2021 back in the fall and winter of 2019, this
8 current crisis was not on their radar. So budgets were
9 developed as if this were going to be a, "normal year."
10 There's certainly nothing normal about what districts are
11 faced with this year.

12 We appreciate you knowing that what I'm going to
13 share with you are not complaints, but rather just the
14 realities of what is happening on the ground in our school
15 communities.

16 Superintendents and school leaders are first and
17 foremost concerned and focused on mitigating the risk of
18 contracting COVID-19. As we all know, on a good day, public
19 schools can be Petri dishes of the plague, with various
20 strains of the flu, common cold moving through them every
21 day. This pandemic multiplies the usual concerns pretty
22 dramatically.

1 Regardless, the health and safety of our students
2 and staff are the first priority, and we need to deal with
3 those basic needs of students before we can even begin to
4 address their academic needs. One of the most critical
5 elements is food and nutrition services.

6 We appreciate the food and nutrition waivers that
7 were provided by the US Department of Education through the
8 New Hampshire DOE that allowed school districts to bus meals
9 to students, but they're set to expire on August 31.

10 So whether we can continue our programs to benefit
11 our most at risk families is unclear, as we enter the school
12 year. And some districts are operating either hybrid or
13 fully remote.

14 For in school programs, breakfast and lunch
15 outside of the cafeteria also bring about additional
16 cleaning needs, food delivery systems and retrieval of
17 waste. We're mindful of all the safety and health needs
18 required with this different meal delivery system, and their
19 significant staffing and material costs associated with
20 that.

21 Critical areas in school nursing: We're lucky in
22 New Hampshire that the majority of schools in our state have

1 a dedicated school nurse, but that's not the case in every
2 district statewide, however, and many of those nurses serve
3 hundreds of nurses at a time.

4 Many school districts are trying to be proactive
5 in this regard and hire additional school nurses, but given
6 the overall nursing shortage in New Hampshire and school
7 nurses in particular, that's a tremendous concern.

8 There are few to no substitute nurse options for
9 schools if a nurse needs time away from the school. Our
10 current budgets don't support the additional staffing and
11 resource needs we will most definitely experience for our
12 school nurses; for PPE districts have really been forced to
13 fend for themselves in obtaining any kind of safety,
14 sanitation or PPE needed to reopen the schools.

15 Significant investments in face masks and shields,
16 gloves, hand sanitizer, Plexiglass, disinfectants, hand
17 cleaning supplies have been made -- hundreds of thousands of
18 dollars statewide that weren't budgeted for -- and these are
19 ongoing expenses that are going to continue to add up over
20 the course of the school year.

21 The cost and storage of that PPE, constant
22 restocking of handwashing supplies, hand sanitizer in dozens

1 of rooms and constant disinfecting efforts during the day
2 are going to require custodial support on top of their
3 already existing job functions.

4 Many districts are trying to hire additional staff
5 to meet the continual cleaning and sanitizing of restrooms
6 and common areas, but those are not in district budgets.

7 Students have not had in-person contact with
8 educators for over five months. So their individual,
9 social, emotional and academic growth is going to have to be
10 assessed.

11 Again, districts are trying to be proactive in
12 this area, to ensure that there are sufficient counseling,
13 supports and resources to meet the needs of returning
14 students, but those supports weren't budgeted for.

15 One of the biggest challenges is physical
16 distancing. And that's not as simple as some make it out to
17 be. Consider the average class size in New Hampshire is 17
18 students in a first through eighth grade classroom, and high
19 schools have several configurations with up to 30 students
20 in a classroom.

21 Adding a requirement to place students six feet
22 apart or even three feet apart if we require face masks

1 while they're sitting at desks in one of our typically sized
2 classrooms, or even surrounded by Plexiglass, and that
3 number needs to be significantly less.

4 Schools are planning to use their gyms,
5 cafeterias, stages, locker rooms, bookrooms, offices -- any
6 space at all to be able to spread students out. That's also
7 the reason for so many hybrid plans, to reduce the number of
8 students in schools to allow for physical distancing.

9 That not only causes facility and air quality
10 concerns, but also staffing concerns. All of the staffing
11 and materials needed to provide for physical distancing
12 weren't budgeted for.

13 As far as the facilities and school operation,
14 probably the largest concern is air quality. Many school
15 and district facilities around the state have old or
16 nonexistent HVAC systems and are unable to provide the
17 indoor air quality that may be necessary to mitigate the
18 spread of COVID-19, not to mention the other typical
19 respiratory illnesses that we already have in school.

20 This isn't anything new, but COVID-19 certainly
21 brings a whole new level of concern. Schools are doing
22 everything they can to address the air quality issues, but

1 there are only so many dollars in school budgets to do this.
2 Districts right now are spending hundreds of thousands of
3 dollars on upgrading, renovating or even trying to install
4 HVAC systems in their schools. Districts that don't have
5 those types of resources are buying window fans -- air
6 conditioning units, air purifiers; anything that will help
7 mitigate the air quality concerns rightly being raised by
8 parents and educators.

9 If all schools were to properly address HVAC
10 issues in our oldest buildings statewide, we'd be talking
11 about tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars.

12 For transportation, RSA 189-6 requires that we
13 provide transportation to all students in K-8 who live more
14 than two miles away from school. The additional costs of
15 bus routes required to provide staggered and ending times is
16 a significant concern. Human bus monitors and increased
17 cleaning and disinfecting needs all add additional costs.

18 In the area staffing, school districts are faced
19 with a number of staffing issues across the spectrum, some
20 of which I've already mentioned. However, one of the
21 unintended consequences of having the flexibility for each
22 district to decide for itself how they'll reopen means that

1 different districts will have different plans. And when
2 those districts share staff and students, where some are
3 remote, others are hybrid or in person, staffing shortages
4 are inevitable.

5 There are also many districts facing significant
6 pushback from their teacher associations about returning to
7 in-person or hybrid construction over safety concerns that
8 are real, but simply can't be addressed as completely as
9 they would wish -- not for a lack of desire, but due to a
10 lack of funding.

11 There was already a significant shortage of subs
12 for all positions: Teachers, nurses, paraeducators,
13 custodians, food service, bus drivers... This current crisis
14 has just made that much worse. There are not enough trees
15 in the state to shake to get subs in the building.

16 Districts are increasing the pay for subs and are
17 trying to hire permanent subs as a possible solution, but
18 those items haven't been budgeted for, and there's no
19 guarantee that there will be enough subsequent for
20 classrooms.

21 One of the largest potential impacts on local
22 school district budgets really is in the area of special

1 education. Given the two orders that Governor Sununu
2 signed, a heavy burden has been placed on districts that are
3 already overburdened.

4 Executive Order #48 specifically requires all
5 students with an IEP -- an individualized education plan --
6 to have their learning assessed, identify any compensatory
7 education services that may be required, and hold an IEP
8 meeting within 30 days of the opening of schools.

9 For many districts, that means hundreds of
10 students, if not thousands, in the case of Nashua and
11 Manchester. There are simply not enough human hours to meet
12 this demand, even with additional staff if we could find and
13 hire them.

14 Executive Order #64 specifically requires in-
15 person services for students with IEPs that require them.
16 Again, this is another staffing issue for many districts,
17 especially those that have decided that they need to open
18 remotely. It not only affects professional staff, but also
19 all the support staff required to maintain a safe and
20 healthy working environment in schools.

21 Compensatory education services for students are
22 likely going to run into millions of dollars statewide, with

1 some districts who can least afford it the most heavily
2 impacted.

3 And lastly, technology. Districts are spending
4 hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy one-to-one devices
5 for students and staff to upgrade outdated machines, along
6 with purchasing integrated software programs and licenses to
7 meet the remote or hybrid needs of students and families.

8 Many districts are faced with delays in shipping
9 of devices and increased costs, due to increased demand.
10 None of those items were budgeted for.

11 As far as the fiscal impact, superintendents have
12 been told repeatedly that there's CARES Act money to address
13 the fiscal needs I've mentioned.

14 In fact, the CARES Act money is not adequate to
15 recoup already the accumulated expenses, let alone provide
16 for the ongoing professional and support staffing needs,
17 cleaning and sanitizing materials, increased SEL supports,
18 staff training -- all required by state and federal law,
19 Executive Order and state and federal health guidelines.

20 We also have instructional needs to address the
21 learning gaps that may now be present. None of those were
22 budgeted for, although some very few districts received a

1 significant amount of funds, over half received less than
2 \$50,000. 10 percent of our districts received nothing.

3 [Pause]

4 JERRY LITTLE: Is that it, Dr. Ladd? Are you
5 ready for questions?

6 [Pause]

7 Dr. Ladd? Afraid we may have lost Dr. Ladd.
8 Senator D'Allesandro, do you have a question?

9 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you, Chairman Little.
10 I think we have lost Dr. Ladd. He disappeared from my
11 phone. But I think it's quite clear the problem that we're
12 facing in education.

13 And the last thing he alluded to was the
14 technology situation. We allocated a considerable amount of
15 money for the expansion of Broadband, and a lot of that
16 money hasn't been spent.

17 And I would suggest we take a look at what's left
18 and transfer that to an account that would allow for the
19 school districts to access that account to try to take care
20 of their technological needs, because they're great and
21 they're significantly -- and they're certainly significantly
22 needed.

1 Without Mr. Ladd on the phone to address that
2 situation, it would seem to me that's something that we have
3 to do, and we have to do it immediately; we can't wait
4 because of the fact that he mentioned three methodologies by
5 which schools will reengage: They'll either go back to
6 school, they'll use an entirely virtual model, or they'll
7 accept a hybrid model.

8 And each of the districts is going to choose one
9 of these methodologies to bring education back. But
10 certainly technology plays a vital role, and I think access
11 to dollars to support their needs is vital, and it's now.
12 Because many of these schools are going to open on September
13 9, and some have already begun to open.

14 But September 9 is coming up very quickly --
15 that's within a couple of weeks. So I believe we've got to
16 act on this today, and make sure that we are supporting
17 public education in the state. I'm sorry that Mr. Ladd's
18 not around to address that -- the vital need.

19 And I know that they're backordering computer
20 equipment. I understand that the major suppliers of
21 computer equipment around the country -- because of the
22 component parts that have been shut down, the purchase of

1 those component parts from China -- that they can't fulfill
2 these orders. Night and that's a really, really significant
3 problem.

4 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Director Little, this is
5 Commissioner Edelblut, and I apologize for barging in. I
6 just had a text message from Dr. Ladd, and he's going to be
7 trying to dial back in. He was on his cell phone and the
8 cell service disconnected, so he's trying to reconnect now.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Commissioner. Dr. Ladd
10 is back is back with us now. First, we have a question from
11 Senator Morse. Would you like to ask a question, Senator?

12 SENATOR MORSE: Yes, but I have a feeling it's
13 going to take me down an avenue that I think the legislature
14 should be dealing with, quite honestly.

15 But I've got a ton of information that's come in
16 in the last week, week and a half that deal with CARES Act
17 funding, FEMA funding I haven't really seen on there.

18 And I certainly don't believe I have the
19 capability, but I would like to understand, because I know
20 my local school district's talking about unreserved fund
21 balance, because of things that didn't happen in the spring.

22 These numbers require -- I think -- committee

1 work. But if the people that are presenting today can speak
2 to any one of those three categories, I think there needs to
3 be a knowledge of all of this before we talk about any
4 appropriation.

5 Because this isn't -- I mean, I'm quite capable of
6 doing it, but I don't sit on Finance, and I don't believe
7 Finance has been meeting about these things, and I think
8 they need to.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Senator. We have
10 Commissioner Edelblut with us this afternoon so he can talk
11 to the bigger picture of funding that is available, but I
12 will give Commissioner Edelblut a bit on our agenda.

13 Dr. Ladd is back with us, I see. Dr. Ladd, are
14 you able to bring a conclusion to your comments for us?

15 CARL LADD: Thank you. Sorry about that, but I'm
16 housed in the north country, and our cell service is not
17 always the best, which also begs some of the connectivity
18 issues that we're plagued with.

19 But I think in closing, it really begs the
20 question how are districts going to pay for all of these
21 unfunded requirements? Both the short-term and long-term
22 fiscal impacts for school districts and communities are

1 going to be significant.

2 Many districts are working with their local
3 municipalities to try to address or access whatever limited
4 FEMA funds are available. But municipalities have their own
5 significant, unbudgeted needs that need to be met.

6 Without another source of revenue for school
7 districts to address the areas I've mentioned, school
8 leaders and school boards are going to be making some very
9 difficult decisions about what area of their already tight
10 budgets are going to be cut, in order to make up for all the
11 unforeseen spending.

12 We know that school leaders, just as you folks
13 are, are faced with a complete no-win situation; regardless
14 of their decisions and that of their locally elected school
15 boards, some people are going to be unhappy, angry and
16 frustrated. That's playing out very personally in many
17 communities across the state.

18 And as much as we want one, there's no right
19 answer. Only the best answer that people of goodwill are
20 really trying to make under the worst of circumstances.

21 I want to conclude by repeating what I said
22 earlier. We appreciate you knowing that these are not

1 complaints, but really just the realities of what's
2 happening on the ground in our school communities. I really
3 do thank you for your time and attention, and please don't
4 hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further
5 information.

6 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much, Dr. Ladd. Are
7 there questions for Dr. Ladd from members of the Board?
8 Senator D'Allesandro, did you just raise your hand, or is
9 that an old one?

10 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: That's an old one. I think
11 that all of our queries have been addressed by Mr. Ladd, and
12 I think the question of how we're going to deal with them is
13 something that's got to take place in a discussion between
14 the members of the GOFERR committee.

15 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. Then we will move on to
16 our next presenter for the day, scheduled to be Mr.
17 Southington -- Max Southerton from the New Hampshire Charter
18 Schools. We don't see it listed on our Board. If you're
19 with us, Mr. Southerton, if you would push 5* that will
20 allow us to identify your phone line and unmute it so you
21 can speak to us, if you're with us, Mr. Southerton?

22 I am not seeing anything pop up on our Board, so

1 we will move on to our next presenter. If you are with us,
2 NEA-New Hampshire President Megan Tuttle and NEA-New
3 Hampshire Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Butler? Ms. Tuttle?
4 Ms. Butler?

5 MEGAN TUTTLE: Hi, this is Megan Tuttle from NEA-
6 New Hampshire.

7 REBECCA BUTLER: And I'm Rebecca Butler, I am the
8 Secretary/Treasurer of NEA-New Hampshire.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you both very much for
10 joining us this afternoon. What would you like the
11 Legislative Advisory Board to know?

12 MEGAN TUTTLE: Thank you for the invitation.
13 Again, my name is Megan Tuttle. I'm the President of NEA-
14 New Hampshire. And we all know schools across the country
15 and New Hampshire are struggling to reopen safely. We agree
16 with everything that Dr. Ladd just presented.

17 And I just wanted to go further. We can't begin
18 to tell you how much we truly want to be with the students
19 again in the classroom. It's the reason we became educators
20 in the first place, but without minimum standards that are
21 being required in other areas of our economy such as
22 restaurants, retail stores et cetera, and without additional

1 funding, it really makes the local district's decision-
2 making process on how to move forward this fall that much
3 more difficult.

4 And sadly, as districts and universities reopen
5 across the country, many are finding themselves having to
6 close again, because the virus has reemerged.

7 And reasons for this vary, but a few things are
8 clear that no matter where you live, the virus is easy to
9 catch and it's difficult to contain. We lack easy access to
10 rapid results testing, and human beings do make mistakes and
11 take chances with PPE and social distancing.

12 New research indicates that children can carry a
13 much higher viral load than adults, and can spread the virus
14 just as easily as adults. One of the reasons infection
15 rates have slowed is because we closed the largest public
16 gathering spaces in each of our communities, our school
17 buildings, and we moved to remote instruction.

18 MEGAN TUTTLE: So today we're here before you to
19 talk about costs -- the dollars and cents that are involved
20 in a myriad of ways each district is now forced to deal with
21 reopening; the extra and added expenses involved in hybrid
22 models and transforming our education system, which is not

1 designed for social distancing, into COVID-resistant zones.

2 When some elected officials say, "cost" I'm sure
3 many of you envision things you can measure and count and
4 pay for. When we hear the word, "cost" we think the cost of
5 lost learning opportunities.

6 We think of the cost of sleepless nights,
7 wrestling with decisions we should not be asked to make,
8 balancing the job we love against the risk to ourselves, our
9 safety and our community. We think of the cost of losing a
10 student or a family member.

11 REBECCA BUTLER: And given all these
12 circumstances, we have stated that we believe the safest and
13 least disruptive path forward is full remote for four to
14 eight weeks at a time for the majority of our students and
15 staff.

16 And why is that? It's because according to recent
17 statistics, New Hampshire ranks fourth in the nation for the
18 percentage of the educators over the age of 55 -- fourth --
19 nearly one in four of those we represent are over the age of
20 55.

21 Others have preexisting medical conditions that
22 make them more vulnerable to the virus, or care for someone

1 who has such a condition. Others are pregnant or try to
2 start a family.

3 The medical community believes they should avoid
4 classrooms and crowded hallways. We think any reopening
5 plan should be compassionate enough to be sure that our
6 public servants are not put at risk.

7 We also want to display -- dispel the thought that
8 going back to school means a return to normalcy.
9 Unfortunately, there's going to be nothing normal about the
10 day for a student who returns to school during the pandemic.

11 Classrooms will be and have been rearranged.
12 There is going to be no small group work or celebration;
13 most will be wearing masks. There will be no cafeteria;
14 only lunch alone at desks. There will be temperature checks
15 and other health screenings, and there will be times when
16 the class may need to quarantine, or the school will close
17 for two weeks or more. And unfortunately, that is not a
18 normal day.

19 And in many cases, that will only be a few days a
20 week. The other days are going to consist of learning at
21 home. To create these COVID-resistant zones will indeed
22 take extra financial resources.

1 NEA- New Hampshire does not create or maintain the
2 budgets of any full district. But we, like you, know the
3 models for reopening our schools during the pandemic will be
4 more expensive.

5 The School Superintendents Association and the
6 Association of School Business Officials International have
7 worked up estimates of how much it will cost for schools to
8 put into place the cleaning and safety steps needed to
9 combat COVID-19. We've included the chart they've prepared
10 in your packet.

11 Per their estimates, they used a school with
12 around 3600 students, eight buildings, 329 staff members,
13 and 180 classrooms. They looked at four areas to consider
14 for reopening: Adhering to health monitoring and cleaning
15 and disinfecting protocols; hiring staff to implement health
16 and safety protocols: providing personal protective
17 equipment or PPE; providing transportation and before and
18 after school child care. They state this is not an
19 exhaustive list; it's rather an illustration of the overall
20 costs of school operations, and how they'll be impacted to
21 safely reopen.

22 They estimate the average district of 3600

1 students will require an additional \$1.8 million dollars to
2 cover the costs associated with the four defined areas.
3 Based on student population alone, there are 12 districts in
4 New Hampshire. This is the average price description in the
5 chart: Bedford, Concord, Derry, Dover, Hudson, Keene,
6 Londonderry, Manchester, Merrimac, Nashua, Rochester and
7 Pinkerton Academy.

8 Manchester is four times the average sized used
9 for the calculations, and Nashua is three times as large.
10 Combined, these three twelve districts would apply for over
11 \$30 million dollars to implement the protocols and staff
12 needed to reopen, according to the rough estimates by AASA.

13 Another way to look at these estimates provided by
14 AASA is to calculate the cost per student to safely reopen.
15 That works out to about \$486 per student. Statewide, that
16 would mean more than \$84 million dollars would be needed to
17 meet the conditions of applying for a safe reopen.

18 None of these costs factor in the money needed to
19 ensure students and staff have the proper technology to
20 perform remote instruction. For example, Pembroke alone for
21 one building is having to increase the broadband width, just
22 so it meets the needs of educators and the students. That's

1 costing them \$14,000 for just one building.

2 Even cutting these estimates in half, New
3 Hampshire's school districts are still looking at
4 significant costs to restart and open our schools safely.
5 One thing is clear; when in-person classes resume, we will
6 have to operate much differently to ensure the health and
7 safety of students and staff. And those differences are
8 going to be expensive.

9 REBECCA BUTLER: So one example of what we expect
10 to see when in-person instruction restarts can be found in
11 Bedford. The Bedford School District conducted professional
12 development with their staff in person over the last few
13 days, and no students were present at these workshops.

14 So at this point, six Bedford staff members are
15 now out due to suspicion of COVID-related symptoms. Most
16 districts' response plans for such occurrences include
17 sending students and staff home, quarantine for 10-14 days,
18 deep cleaning enclosures.

19 So we often hear the question, "How many students
20 and staff will need to be infected before another shutdown?"
21 But we think that question misses the point, and clearly
22 indicates the misplaced priorities. The real question has

1 always been, "Why should another student or staff member
2 become infected when they do not need to be?"

3 We are now in the position that many districts are
4 going back to in-person instruction, and our local unions
5 have been working furiously through their labor Management
6 Safety Committees, and employer-union relationships to craft
7 as safe a version as possible for any in-person schooling.

8 We hope that you can help support these districts
9 with the resources they need to safely open. PPE supplies
10 adequate HVAC systems, rapid testing capabilities,
11 additional cleaning supplies, and substitute teaching costs,
12 just to name a few.

13 Another specific issue that the state could help
14 with are the costs for leave for educators who must
15 quarantine into COVID-like symptoms, once their federal
16 emergency leave is exhausted.

17 As we all know, this is a very fluid situation,
18 where some educators may have to quarantine at the beginning
19 of the school year, like what's happening at Bedford, and
20 then have to do so again should a second wave hit.

21 Districts are very hesitant to fund such
22 additional leave due to costs, but this is counterintuitive,

1 given the importance of quarantine to contain the virus
2 spread and avoid an outbreak.

3 We'd like to urge this committee to look at pre-
4 funding any additional COVID leave bank funds the district
5 could draw from in order to fund such leave, should it be
6 required.

7 And finally, as the President of the United States
8 underscored the other day, educators are essential workers.
9 And I think it's important that the state treat them as
10 such. Today, we sent a letter to the Governor urging him to
11 grant the prima facie presumption that educators, COVID 19
12 exposure and infection be occupationally related for the
13 same reasons outlined for First Responders in his Emergency
14 Order #36. We would respectfully ask that you urge him to
15 grant this request.

16 MARY TAYLOR: Thank you for inviting us to come
17 today and speak before you and with you. We're happy to
18 answer any questions you might have.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you both. Are there
20 questions for either Ms. Tuttle or Ms. Butler? Senator
21 Soucy?

22 DONNA SOUCY: Thank you. I wonder if you could

1 both address the comments that Dr. Ladd made previously
2 about the requirements for conducting meetings on IEPs, and
3 just kind of flesh that out a little bit and some of the
4 additional concerns you may have?

5 MARY TAYLOR: Sure, I can take that, Senator
6 Soucy. The concerns of having to have those meetings within
7 the 30 days after school starts is a concern to us. It's
8 unrealistic that most people can get that done looking at
9 when school starts, and just the amount of the things that
10 some would have to have.

11 We had signed onto a letter that was sent to the
12 Governor earlier to ask for an extension of that to -- I
13 believe it was four to five days, and that was declined.
14 You know, it's a huge concern. It's just not enough time to
15 get everything done within the 30 days.

16 It's not that we don't want to assess the
17 students; we need to know where they're at, but the reality
18 of what that looks like versus what it looks like on paper
19 are two different things.

20 DONNA SOUCY: Thank you.

21 JERRY LITTLE: Further questions, Senator?

22 Further questions?

1 [Pause]

2 All right. Seeing none, thank you both very much
3 for joining us this afternoon.

4 COLLECTIVE: Thank you.

5 JERRY LITTLE: We will move on to our next
6 presentation. Paula McKinnon, R.N. and President of the New
7 Hampshire School Nurses Association. Ms. McKinnon, are you
8 with us?

9 PAULA MCKINNON: Hi, yes. This is Paula McKinnon
10 from the New Hampshire School Nurses Association. If I
11 could make a comment on the last question that was asked
12 about IEP being extended from 30 to 45 days.

13 I wanted to point out to the Committee that almost
14 all school districts are spending the first couple of weeks
15 with their students addressing the social, emotional impact
16 that COVID has had, and I would be concerned that teachers
17 who run those IEP meetings need to be with the kids at that
18 time, so that makes it doubly hard to get that thirty-day
19 mark to have all of that done.

20 And I think that we all realize that the emotional
21 challenges that are still [01:15:32 audio unclear] is the
22 priority for the first couple weeks of school. So I just

1 wanted to comment on that before I move into my
2 presentation.

3 Can you hear me okay?

4 JERRY LITTLE: Yes, we can hear you fine, thank
5 you.

6 PAULA MCKINNON: Okay, thank you. Thank you. I'd
7 like to start out by saying that approximately 175,000
8 students in public elementary school in New Hampshire, and
9 our schools are the excellent location to promote health in
10 children, and the school nurses' unique position to meet
11 students' health care needs.

12 Our school nurses are prepared for and practice at
13 the same level as their colleagues, such as teachers who are
14 certified, occupational therapists, physical therapists and
15 speech therapists.

16 The entry-level school nurse is a Registered Nurse
17 in New Hampshire with a Bachelor's Degree or higher, and
18 they've had three years of clinical courses in Public
19 Health.

20 What I'd also like to say is that our association
21 does have 875 school nurses who are currently members. We
22 are an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) and we are here simply to

1 support school nurses in their practice in the state of New
2 Hampshire.

3 We do not receive any federal funding, any state
4 funding, et cetera. We do receive support from a New
5 Hampshire Department of Education and from the New Hampshire
6 Division of Public Health Services.

7 During these COVID times, the New Hampshire Public
8 Services Division has given us extreme help; every Friday,
9 we have weekly calls with the Division of Infection Control
10 and Communicable Diseases. Dr. Chan is the one that runs
11 those groups and school nurses have been meeting with him
12 now at least four weeks in a row.

13 They, seeing the need for it, have hired a
14 temporary physician who is going to do the liaison between
15 the school over COVID-19 related questions. With the Health
16 and oversight of the New Hampshire DPS.

17 The School Nurses Association did publish a best
18 practices document to assist school nurses in how to
19 implement the new guidelines and thinking about all the
20 different scenarios in schools such as social distancing, et
21 cetera. and how the guidelines can be implemented.

22 Now, since that time, the CDC has come out with

1 two different documents that are not in agreement with the
2 original document that they had put out. You may have been
3 hearing the CDC, "has issued new guidance." Well, they did
4 again just yesterday.

5 And that guidance unfortunately does not match
6 what New Hampshire vision of public health services wants to
7 see implemented in the school with their guidelines.

8 There's been a conscious decision to not go along
9 with that guidance, and it's very difficult to get the
10 message out to parents, school and nurses as to what the
11 differences are, and why New Hampshire is specifically
12 sticking with their original guidelines. And I'll go into
13 that critical question if you both have it.

14 As far as the New Hampshire Department of
15 Education, we would love to have more coordination with
16 them. There is a School Nurse Coordinator Position within
17 the New Hampshire DOE that was mandated to be filled as of
18 July, 2019, and unfortunately the position has not been
19 filled. We would have very much greatly have benefitted
20 from that.

21 I would like to point out that the school Nurse
22 Coordinator feels it could have addressed the following gaps

1 that school nurses and school districts face.

2 The school district didn't have anyone to consult
3 with on their school plans, as to whether or not they needed
4 public health education. I think that our association has
5 held several free consultations with school nurses, but
6 that's not the same as the school districts having
7 consultations. And they certainly, I think, would have
8 appreciated more guidance in that area.

9 We firmly believe that more training needs to
10 happen on how to implement to [01:20:00 audio unclear CDC]
11 reduce the transmission, and there are so many different
12 plans across the state that address it in slightly different
13 ways.

14 So we are concerned that not all districts are
15 implementing the strategies in the same way, which makes it
16 difficult for parents, when they see and hear that another
17 town will not be doing what their town is doing.

18 Okay. So there's sort of a gap for school nurses.
19 We are currently collaborating with the New Hampshire
20 American Academy of Pediatrics and the New Hampshire
21 Partners in Pediatric Health projects out of UNH. And we
22 are looking for funding that would bring together a

1 collaborative of progressive [01:20:46 audio unclear]es with
2 their local pediatric primary care physicians.

3 And the reason to do that is to strengthen the
4 link between medical home and school health and to ensure
5 that there is a free process where school nurses are sending
6 these children home with mild symptoms that there is the
7 primary care physician on the other end treating the cases
8 the same way and testing.

9 So it really would improve school health. School
10 nurses are really an extension of public health, and this
11 would be a way to improve that collaboration.

12 We would like to hold a 10-month series of webinar
13 through the entire school year on the COVID and health needs
14 of the school constellation. It takes money to do such a
15 thing, and this was very short notice, because we have just
16 started talking about it, but it would take about \$150,000
17 to be able to coordinate training throughout the state of
18 New Hampshire.

19 The pandemic needs of the school nurses are simply
20 coordinating efforts across school districts. It's very
21 difficult for school nurses when they are chatting with each
22 other, and questions arise as to why is this school district

1 doing this, and my school district is doing something
2 different?

3 Coordinated efforts would have been much easier,
4 we believe, to make parents feel comfortable sending their
5 kids back to school.

6 There is a need for professional oversight in the
7 form of a school nurse coordinator. There are some school
8 districts -- without mentioning who -- who definitely are
9 having problems implementing the guidelines, and they
10 certainly would benefit from some oversight [slash]
11 suggestion from someone with authority at the DOE.

12 School nurses are very, very worried about not
13 having enough extra staff to implement a proper isolation
14 room. All school districts should follow the guidelines.
15 They're attempting to have an isolation room from the sick,
16 sick students to report to, as well as the regular Nurse's
17 Office for the routine medication, diabetic testing, injury
18 management, et cetera.

19 That takes extra staff to do that, and many, many
20 school systems are just not able to hire extra staff.

21 Many school districts were not able to implement a
22 screening program, due to the monumental amount of staff

1 that that would have taken, screening school students as
2 they're arriving to school.

3 So that's one area that across the board in many,
4 many school districts is not being implemented, and the
5 screening is done at home by the parent, but there's no
6 oversight into whether or not it has actually been done.

7 And last on our list is absolutely the turn-around
8 time for testing, we're very concerned about that too.
9 There are only two types of tests -- antigen and PCR -- that
10 are currently available for testing.

11 If it's a slow week for the labs, you could have a
12 turnaround in two days. But if it's -- the testing right
13 now in New Hampshire is taking four to five days, at the
14 least. And that varies from week to week. So it could be
15 good this week, but then it won't be the week after.

16 So we would like to see there are new testing
17 models coming out. We'd like to see the possibility of some
18 of our larger school systems becoming testing sites. There
19 is a test coming out that would be very easy for school
20 nurses to administer if there's a quick test that doesn't
21 involve a lab at all in the form of saliva.

22 So as those new capabilities roll out, we'd like

1 to see some coordination between the schools and DPS to be
2 able to implement some of those strategies.

3 Yeah, let's see. Physical distancing is
4 definitely something on the nurses' mind. It is very
5 difficult to physical distance in the school setting.

6 And the public health message is that any distance
7 closer than six feet definitely needs to be met, and I think
8 that school districts are sometimes confusing that when they
9 hear the language that it's okay to be three feet apart.

10 So some education I think would have been helpful,
11 explaining the rationale behind why it's six feet, and why
12 for schools it can only be three feet. Yes, it's true that
13 it can only be three feet in schools; that's not the ideal,
14 six feet is the ideal. And anything less than six, they
15 need to keep their masks on.

16 And so, we're concerned that not all schools are
17 mandating masks, although I can say that most are. But that
18 many of them are allowing masks breaks when students are
19 closer than six feet, because they may not realize that
20 three feet is not the recommended to not have a mask on.

21 We're concerned that some school districts are not
22 trying to space out their kids on the busing.

1 Unfortunately, the schools that did not go hybrid means that
2 all their students are coming back five days a week.

3 And in some of those school districts, it was a
4 low percentage of students that chose to go remote, and that
5 does cause the issue on busing. So they're not putting the
6 kids every other seat, they're putting them in some cases
7 two to a seat every seat.

8 We are hoping in those districts that many parents
9 when they realize that will opt to drive their parents (sic)
10 in, but it certainly is not a certainty that all school
11 districts would do that.

12 And I certainly concur that we are going to see
13 cases in New Hampshire. There is a very specific guideline
14 put out by New Hampshire Department of Public Health
15 Services that tells us how to implement these strategies,
16 and it is a major difference from how ill students in school
17 have been dealt with in the past.

18 We need to be absolutely sure that all of our
19 nurses in school districts know what that means, how it's
20 going to look, and what steps they need to take.

21 And again, there hasn't been any -- well, there
22 hasn't been guidance from New Hampshire Department of Public

1 Health Services, but there isn't the training put together
2 for schools to attend to be sure that what their plan is
3 meets as much of that guidance as it can.

4 And I think that would be the end of my
5 presentation.

6 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much, Ms. McKinnon.
7 Are there questions for the School Nurses Association?

8 Senator D'Allesandro? Senator D'Allesandro, do
9 you have a question for us?

10 [Pause]

11 You may need to take yourself off mute, Senator?

12 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Got it. Thank you, Jerry.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you.

14 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: it's -- sometimes it's very
15 difficult to be muted and unmuted, but we make it. I just
16 wanted to mention to everybody that I have a stake in this
17 game. My daughter-in-law in the School Nurse at Concord
18 High School.

19 So many of the items that were mentioned by the
20 presenter are absolutely true, and I think the rapid testing
21 that has been suggested by Representative Wallner and myself
22 early on, that's an essential -- an absolute essential, and

1 really has to be addressed.

2 I think the -- my question is, the coordination
3 and the training: What has been done prior to the opening of
4 schools to discuss what kinds of additional training is
5 needed, and how that additional training can be given to the
6 nurses who are going back?

7 PAULA MCKINNON: Well, any training that has
8 happened has been the weekly calls with the Department of
9 Public Health Services -- Dr. Chan and Elizabeth Daley a
10 [01:29:21 audio unclear, proper names and Elizabeth .]

11 As far as training specifics, there have been
12 various webinars at the School Nurse Association has put on
13 for the summer, and those were attended probably by 50 to 75
14 nurses out of -- there's probably 450 in the state. So
15 there hasn't been any direct, specific training that was
16 mandated by the DOE to come to schools or scare nurses to
17 receive.

18 And we're saying that we would appreciate that in
19 coordination of the COVID response across the state of New
20 Hampshire; it's very important to have the nurses at the
21 table, because they're going to be answering the questions
22 that parents have when they call in to follow those

1 guidelines.

2 And frankly, some of those guidelines are a little
3 hard to implement, and there's going to be pushback from
4 parents. For example, there are very -- there's a long list
5 of very subtle illnesses such as a runny nose or chronic
6 cough or as simple as diarrhea or stomachache.

7 Those are to be identified as a possible case of
8 COVID if they don't already exist as part of a chronic
9 health condition.

10 Those children will be going home, and the
11 verbiage to be able to explain the parent exactly why
12 they're going home and what's expected from there. What's
13 expected is that they get a test before they come back into
14 the school system.

15 Those are very difficult conversations to have
16 with a parent, and some extra training for the school nurses
17 and school administrators would have been very helpful in
18 that regard.

19 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Okay. Thank you. Further
20 question, Mr. Chairman?

21 JERRY LITTLE: Certainly, Senator.

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you. The position

1 that hasn't been filled at the Department of Education, what
2 has been the rationale given to the Nurses Association as to
3 why that job hasn't been filled?

4 PAULA MCKINNON: Well, I heard the commissioner
5 say that it was budget cuts, and that certainly would have
6 been true in the January to March timeframe. The last time
7 it was tested in January, it wasn't filled, and I'm not sure
8 of the exact time on that.

9 Previous to that, there were not enough
10 candidates, we were told. And we were told it was being
11 reposted in January because they felt they didn't have a
12 viable candidate.

13 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you. Thank you,
14 Chairman Little.

15 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Wallner, you have a
16 question?

17 MARY JANE WALLNER: I do, thank you. Thank you
18 for calling on me. It seems that the Nurse Coordinator at
19 the Department of Education is really crucial, being sure
20 that all of our school nurses have the same information, and
21 everyone working together around training for the nurses.

22 Have you had any indication that they have decided to

1 reinstated; to look for that position at this point?

2 PAULA MCKINNON: I have not heard. I know that
3 Commissioner Edelblut might still be on the line, he might
4 be able to answer that.

5 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay. I think he's going to
6 speak in just a few minutes, so I can wait and ask him that
7 question. But the other thing I wanted to know is how many
8 schools -- actual schools -- in New Hampshire actually have
9 a nurse? Do all schools have nurses, or are there some
10 schools that do not have nurses?

11 PAULA MCKINNON: There are definitely some schools
12 that do not have nurses. Our conversations with districts
13 indicate that those are the much smaller districts, that
14 simply can't afford it within this budget. We know that
15 there's many charter schools that can't afford school
16 nurses.

17 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay.

18 PAULA MCKINNON: Some of them do look for a school
19 nurse consultant, and some of them don't. But it's
20 definitely an expense. They are a professional working
21 within the school, and as such need to be compensated in
22 that regard.

1 And unfortunately, we're all of the belief that
2 there's not a school nurse shortage; there is a lack of
3 positions with comparable pay for a school nurse, and that
4 if the districts that can't find nurses need to, you know,
5 raise the amount of money that they're offering to be able
6 to get a nurse to transfer over from hospital nursing to
7 school nursing.

8 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay. You don't -- right now,
9 you don't have a number of how many schools do not have
10 nurses?

11 PAULA MCKINNON: I do not. I do know that there
12 are three districts actively looking for someone, and
13 they're advertising through our association, but that's only
14 because they contacted me to tell me. I don't believe -- if
15 the DOE might have that information, I don't know.

16 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay, thank you.

17 JERRY LITTLE: Further questions for Ms. McKinnon?
18 I don't believe we see any on the Board, so thank you very
19 much.

20 PAULA MCKINNON: Thank you so much for your time.
21 Thank you so much for your time inviting me.

22 JERRY LITTLE: Our pleasure. Thank you very much.

1 I would like to check one more time to see if Mr. Matt
2 Southerton has been able to join us. We don't see you on
3 our Board, but possibly if you could 5*, hit 5* Mr.
4 Southerton, and that will allow us to identify what line you
5 might be calling in on. I'll give you a minute for that.

6 [Pause]

7 So one more opportunity Mr. Southerton to hit *5
8 on his keypad to let us know what line he might be calling
9 in on.

10 [Pause]

11 All right. Unfortunately, I don't see -- I'm
12 sorry that Mr. Southerton may have joined us by now. So we
13 are somewhat nearing the end of our conversation about
14 education today. Commissioner Edelblut, are you still with
15 us, sir?

16 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: I am.

17 JERRY LITTLE: Wonderful. Great to hear from you
18 today, Frank. We asked you to join us to give us a general
19 overview of funding that has been or remains available to
20 school districts from all sources.

21 You did provide us with a fairly detailed document
22 this afternoon, so thank you for that, and I just want to

1 make sure that everybody on the Board has received their
2 copy of that document; if not, send us an e-mail and we'll
3 make sure we get it to you.

4 Go ahead, Commissioner.

5 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Great. So thank you so
6 much for letting me join you today, and I am happy to join
7 my other education colleagues in sharing with GOFERR kind of
8 status of what is happening relative to our school reopening
9 efforts.

10 You know, and again I appreciate all of the
11 information that they have presented, and I won't repeat
12 that. I'm going to focus, as you described, Director
13 Little, mostly on the fiscal aspects of this, but happy to
14 take questions on any -- you know, any topics that you might
15 have for me relative to reopening.

16 We did provide you with a great deal of detail in
17 terms of the various funding sources that are available to
18 our districts in order to be able to try and support their
19 education mission, particularly to pivot into -- in some
20 cases hybrid models and remote models as well as in-person
21 instructional models with mitigating strategies to keep our
22 staff and our students safe, which is job number one in all

1 of the decision-making that is taking place.

2 I thought I would start with Executive Order #38, and
3 just point out some of the -- one of the orders that's in
4 there that really is a small modification of RSA-32:11.

5 But that states that if a school district's budget
6 is insufficient to fund expenditures associated with
7 addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, the governing body is
8 authorized once authorization from the Department of
9 Education has been obtained to make such expenditure to the
10 extent other revenues or unrestricted fund balances are
11 available to meet these expenses.

12 So essentially that is a process whereby if a
13 school is discovering that they have extraordinary expenses
14 that they did not anticipate, particularly those -- and
15 that's any expense under RSA-32:11, but specific to COVID-
16 19, they have the ability to make an application to the
17 Department of Education for those extraordinary expenses.
18 We can approve those, so that they may move forward with
19 those.

20 To date, for the GOFERR Committee, I have received
21 requests from two districts who have indicated that they had
22 insufficient fund expenditures associated with the COVID

1 pandemic. In both of those cases, the requests were not for
2 additional funds, but to use unexpended funds from the
3 previous fiscal year.

4 So funds had not been expended in the previous
5 fiscal year, and the district was asking permission to
6 expend those carryover, unexpended but previously
7 appropriated funds.

8 So I have received two of these requests so far.
9 I don't know if that's because the districts are still
10 trying to -- you know, get their plans finalized and
11 understand where they are, but I think that that's an
12 important kind of data point for us to consider.

13 I'd then like to just walk through some of the
14 various funding sources that are available -- both federal
15 and state programmatically, to our districts, to be able to
16 access to help support their response to COVID.

17 I will start with CARES Act funds. We received a
18 total of \$37 million dollars of ESSER CARES Act funds to be
19 able to support our response to COVID. \$34 million of that
20 was allocated directly to the schools under a formula basis.
21 And as Dr. Ladd pointed out, that meant that some schools
22 received more, some less -- really, using a formula that

1 would have been based upon need in those communities.

2 To date -- so those grants were made available to
3 the districts in May -- to date, about \$13 million of it has
4 been budgeted by the districts, which basically means
5 they've gone to the system, they've started work on figuring
6 out how they will spend that, and \$500,000 of it has
7 actually been used at this point in time of the \$34 million
8 dollars.

9 The remaining from the \$34 million up to the \$37
10 million that were received is what's referred to as state-
11 level funds. And so, the state has invested in a project
12 called, "I learn NH" -- "I learn New Hampshire" -- which is
13 really a technology investment collaborative working with
14 the University System of New Hampshire and the Community
15 College System of New Hampshire. We have acquired statewide
16 licenses to a learning management system, as well as a
17 statewide license to Zoom.

18 And these are products that by doing that as a
19 statewide basis, we do two things. One is, we gain the
20 benefits of statewide procurement.

21 So the typical license for Zoom goes from about
22 \$11 or \$12 at the district were to acquire that down to

1 about \$4.50 on the state contract, so that it -- and the
2 state will be paying for it so the district won't have that
3 cost on a go forward basis.

4 And then the Canvas Learning Management System
5 again is -- following up Senator D'Allesandro's emphasis on
6 technology -- is a learning platform and a learning
7 management system that ensures the effectiveness and quality
8 of the instructional opportunities that we're affording to
9 our students, and it is also technology that allows the
10 districts to have a degree of nimbleness associated with
11 moving between an in-person instructional model, a hybrid
12 model, and a remote model.

13 So I applaud Senator D'Allesandro's, you know,
14 emphasis on technology, and I think that it is appropriate
15 that we continue to invest in technology, you know, with or
16 without the pandemic to be effective in our instructional
17 models.

18 I would also point -- well, actually, I'll point
19 out another technology thing in a moment. Then as well, as
20 Senator D'Allesandro pointed out, we put \$50 million dollars
21 into the Broadband. The program is being administered by
22 the Office of Strategic Initiative, but I believe about \$20

1 million of that is going to be used.

2 But that's in additional funding that was made
3 available to really drive home the importance of
4 connectivity in terms of being able to be nimble and
5 effective in our instruction.

6 And then I think it was mentioned in the beginning
7 of this call the Municipal Relief Fund as well -- about \$32
8 million dollars, and we have had conversations with all of
9 our districts, emphasizing to them that that municipal
10 relief is not just available for non-school-related
11 activities; it's available for school-related activities in
12 those municipalities as well, if they are mitigating the
13 effects of COVID.

14 And as we know, the school districts have, because
15 of their size and their prominence in the communities, have
16 felt the brunt of some of that.

17 So adding those items up, you get about \$125
18 million dollars of CARES-related funding streams that we
19 have tried to make available in various forms to our
20 districts.

21 I'd then like to shift to some of our existing
22 programming. We have what is referred to as "Title programs

1 " in our districts. Title programs are the funding streams
2 that we receive from the federal government that can be used
3 across a variety of programs. Those include Title I, Title
4 II, Title III, Title IV-A, Title IV-B, Title V, Homeless,
5 IDEA grants -- a lot of different funding streams that we
6 have available through that process.

7 So about -- today we have about \$200 million
8 dollars of those funding streams that are accessible to our
9 districts, because those funds come in tranches every three
10 years -- so every 27 months you have another grant
11 allocation that comes to us.

12 And one of the things that we are trying to help
13 encourage our districts to look at is typically those funds
14 -- for example, if I were to take Title I, might be used in
15 a certain way in a traditional instructional model in terms
16 of how they are deployed, but we're not in a traditional
17 instructional model now, and there is some room for those
18 funds to be deployed differently that achieve the objectives
19 of the Title programs, but as well mitigate some of the
20 effects, particularly the educational effects, associated
21 with COVID-19.

22 And so, that is, again, about \$200 million dollars

1 that's available to our districts.

2 And then in addition, in the -- I think it was
3 probably the beginning of July or late June, the state of
4 New Hampshire, the Department of Education received an
5 additional \$47 million dollars of grant allocation from the
6 USDA for our food programs to be able to continue to support
7 our families through those food programs.

8 So all told, additional federal funding that we've
9 seen come into the state and are available to us are about
10 \$240 million dollars, \$241 million dollars.

11 And then the final aspect -- maybe not even final,
12 but another aspect that -- well actually, I want to pause
13 just a minute. When we talk those title programs doesn't
14 and this is something that I think is important -- is that
15 Title IV-A programs that we have, we received a waiver from
16 the federal government.

17 So typically that Title IV-A funding can be used
18 for a variety of things, but there are some restrictions --
19 the federal government has given us a waiver to allow us to
20 deploy more of that funding specifically to technology.

21 So there is about \$10.6 million dollars of
22 available funds in our Title IV-A grants that can be

1 deployed specifically in the areas of technology that is
2 available for our districts.

3 And then the last piece that I wanted to mention
4 is, as you know through the legislature process, the
5 legislature appropriated an additional \$60 million dollars
6 to our districts under the Fiscal Disparity Aid principally.

7 And so each district is receiving an additional --
8 you know, one-time allocation through that Fiscal Disparity
9 Aid that they have broad discretion in terms of how that is
10 being used, with the idea that it is associated with one-
11 time type projects, but certainly -- you know, in a pandemic
12 we hope this this is a once in a lifetime type of a project
13 that we can move forward with.

14 Just a couple of other things that I will touch
15 base on, and then I can take any questions that you might
16 have. We are also having a number of conversations around
17 VLACS.

18 So it looks like our numbers of enrollments
19 associated with VLACS are going to increase considerably,
20 which may result in about an additional \$12 million dollars
21 of funding required for VLACS, that we are working on trying
22 to meet that need as well.

1 And the VLACS has played a key role in many of our
2 districts' reopening strategies. Although the objective of
3 VLACS is to really be a fallback position for a student or a
4 family that a district can't otherwise accommodate somehow,
5 we have seen a large number of increases in VLACS.

6 But we continue to work with our districts to make sure
7 that we're developing instructional models that can support
8 not just a fully remote student, but really a disrupted
9 student sometimes I like to think about this as, as the
10 School Nurse Association pointed out, we will have students
11 that are coming into our buildings, and if they display
12 symptoms that are not otherwise understood, they would be
13 asked to exclude themselves from that instructional
14 requirement for up to 10 days.

15 And what we want to make sure we have happen is
16 that during that 10 day period, we don't disrupt their
17 education, but we maintain continuity of instruction for
18 those students, even when they have to move in and out of
19 that in-person learning and instructional environment.

20 And so, those are some of the perspectives
21 relative to, you know, the funding streams. I thought that
22 Dr. Ladd did a great job kind of walking through the various

1 areas that are -- you know, of operations, and how those are
2 affected. And then there's a bit of a landscape in terms of
3 the funding for you to consider.

4 And with that, I will pause and see if there's any
5 questions folks have for me?

6 JERRY LITTLE: Well, thank you very much,
7 Commissioner, for that overview. We do have a question for
8 you already from Representative Dick Hinch. And here's
9 notice to anybody else on the Board, that if you're going to
10 have a question for Commissioner Edelblut, please 5* and let
11 us know that you have a question to ask.

12 Representative Hinch?

13 DICK HINCH: Yes, thank you, Director Little. So
14 Frank, thank you for joining us this afternoon. If I
15 understood your presentation correctly -- and I was trying
16 to take very copious notes -- there is plenty of money
17 available to the districts for various purpose.

18 And really the challenge is to perhaps
19 recommunicate with them and direct them to the appropriate
20 buckets that are available, versus us believing this
21 afternoon that we have to allocate even more dollars.

22 We have funds -- it's the funds right now have not

1 been requested. Is that an accurate statement?

2 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Well, so -- again, I don't
3 want to -- it may be premature to answer the question in the
4 context of these guys are still working through their
5 reopening plan, so it could be -- again, today I've only
6 received two requests for insufficient fund expenditure
7 availability.

8 But as those plans develop, I may see more of
9 those come in, but then what I am also describing is all of
10 the various funding streams that are available and
11 accessible to our districts for a variety of different types
12 of purposes, you know, that range -- you know, depending on
13 how you want to count each one of these, you know somewhere
14 between -- you know, \$350 and 425 million dollars.

15 DICK HINCH: Okay. So the urgency, then -- I
16 don't want to put words in your mouth -- the urgency then to
17 allocate today -- isn't really there as much as the urgency
18 for the individual districts to develop plans and therefore
19 then an ask. Would that be accurate?

20 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So it is important for
21 them to ask. And the only caveat that I will put on that is
22 that it could be -- you know, individualized, right? I'm

1 looking at overall numbers. I can't tell you that there's
2 not a specific district that may have received perhaps a
3 smaller -- as Dr. Ladd pointed out -- a smaller ESSER
4 allocation, and they need additional funds, you know,
5 specifically.

6 So I'm giving you kind of the big picture, but
7 it's possible that there are individual districts who have
8 specific needs that they've just not yet made an allocation
9 or request for allocation for yet.

10 DICK HINCH: Okay, so -- and then final follow-up
11 on that, Frank. So agreeing with Dr. Ladd that there may
12 have been some who received an allocation that wasn't quite
13 what they needed or wanted, have they come back to you and
14 said, "Hey, if there's any money left over in the cookie
15 just a reminder, keep me in mind and send it my way?"

16 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So I do -- I have one
17 commissioner in a district who's not filed a Request for
18 Waiver with me at this point in time that has expressed to
19 me that they have a need in the area of \$390,000 that they
20 are working to fill locally, but then they've put that on my
21 radar that they may be coming for some requests for relief.

22 DICK HINCH: And the money is available if they

1 should do that?

2 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Depending on what the
3 nature of the request is and which of these streams we can
4 pull it out of, yes.

5 DICK HINCH: Yeah, okay, thank you. Appreciate
6 it.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. Our next question is
8 from Representative Maryjane Wallner.

9 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you. Thank you,
10 Commissioner. The ESSER funds, are they -- do they need to
11 be sent down by December 31?

12 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: No, they do not. The
13 ESSER funds actually have a longer life, all the way through
14 September 30, 2021, they have to work with those funds.

15 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: And if I didn't say this -
17 - I've said it in many other public forums -- you know, the
18 sense is that those funds are not being are considered as
19 the districts were finalizing their plans and trying to
20 figure out what they're going to spend the money on.

21 And then I would hope that we see, you know, a
22 large surge in the use of that. But we -- you know, to

1 date, we haven't seen that. So I think they're still
2 working on that.

3 MARY JANE WALLNER: And I assume that the chart
4 that you provided us with is up on your website someplace
5 that we could see. I'm sure you're updating it regularly,
6 so we can see how the drawdown is proceeding over the next
7 several months?

8 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yeah, we're having -- I
9 mean, I'm monitoring it regularly. We don't put it on the
10 website, but I'm happy to share that information with you.

11 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay that -- I think, you
12 know, I would like to see how that's proceeding, how the
13 drawdown is going through those different areas.

14 And then I have one other question, which is
15 unrelated to the funds, but it's around the Nurse
16 Coordinator at the Department of Education.

17 The people who spoke before you talked about there
18 not being a Nurse Coordinator at the Department. I know
19 that there's a Nurse Coordinator position within the budget,
20 and I wondered how you're proceeding with that at this
21 point?

22 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yeah, so that passed and

1 came through the budgeting process after it was enacted into
2 law. We went and completed the job application, the SJD
3 that's required, sent that over to the Department of
4 Personnel -- DOP.

5 As you -- I think probably understand and know, it
6 takes between five and six months to get a new position
7 approved through that process. Got that approved, posted
8 that position I believe in January. Went through an
9 interview process, did not have a candidate that was
10 acceptable in disposition to the rest of them. I think it
11 was reposted right before. Then we went into a hiring
12 freeze at the state level. And so, that's where that stands
13 today.

14 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you, Commissioner.
15 Commissioner, would it be possible to ask for a waiver? I
16 realize that it's a frozen position at this point, but would
17 it be something that you would go forward and ask for a
18 waiver to have that one unfrozen so that you could have
19 someone available at the Department as a Nurse Coordinator?

20 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: I would be happy to ask
21 for a waiver.

22 MARY JANE WALLNER: It seems, you know, a lot of -

1 - it seems like the nurses -- the School Nurse Association
2 seemed to think that that was an important educational piece
3 for school nurses that they need. And I have --

4 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yep, can I just -- I'd
5 just like to respond to that if I may real quickly. So what
6 we have done is, so we do have the nurses who are invited to
7 Friday calls.

8 So we are the ones who organize those so that on
9 every week, all of our school nurses who tune into that call
10 have the opportunity to engage directly with Dr. Chan, Dr.
11 Talbot, Dr. Daley and get very specific information and
12 responses to their questions, including the public health
13 has developed a very detailed, lengthy I might add, Q&A for
14 our nurses that responds to all of the frequently asked
15 questions that they have.

16 And then they are putting together a nurse toolkit
17 for our nurses as well, to make sure that they are equipped
18 and they understand the various procedures and protocols
19 that would be required through that process.

20 And then working closely with Lori Shibinette.
21 She has -- and I think it's appropriately -- set up a
22 specified and dedicated person. "Sheryl" is over at HHS in

1 the Office of Public Health, that (sic) is available to
2 directly respond to questions from our school nurses.

3 And one of the advantages of having Sheryl located
4 in the Department of Public Health is that she is right
5 there in that building, and has direct access to Dr. Daley,
6 Dr. Chan and Dr. Talbot. So hopefully that will expedite
7 some of the responses to them, and the responsiveness to
8 them.

9 And then the other thing I'll tell you is we've
10 invited all of our nurses also, as well as all of our school
11 leaders to a Thursday weekly call that we do with public
12 health. And this is for all public health officials and
13 practitioners in the state.

14 And this is a call that gives them broad
15 information and including keeping them up to date on all the
16 health alerts -- you know, releases from Health and Human
17 Services, so that everybody gets to stay on the same page.
18 So a combination of those regular communications I think has
19 been valuable in terms of keeping everyone moving in the
20 same direction.

21 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you. And I have one
22 further question. And you may -- this might not -- it might

1 be something you need to skip for me for later, but how many
2 schools do not have a nurse on staff?

3 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yeah. So I don't actually
4 know that information either. I can tell you that according
5 to education rules -- so this is covered actually in ED
6 306:12, and under state law, basically school boards are
7 required to have qualified personnel to carry out
8 appropriate health-related activities.

9 And that may mean that they have a nurse, or it is
10 the case that in some of our schools they don't have a
11 school nurse, but they have a relationship perhaps with a
12 local pediatrician or practitioner that comes into the
13 school and is providing those types of support services.

14 So it is possible that you don't see a school
15 nurse on the roster, but it is required that every school
16 carry -- you know, have a -- someone to carry out those
17 health-related activities.

18 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay. And if a school wanted
19 to use some of their ESSER school spending -- some of their
20 ESSER funds for a nurse position, would that be allowable?

21 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So it would have to be
22 tied -- yeah, because it's -- that's one-time funding, so I

1 would just caution the district if they wanted to do that,
2 but then the second is it wouldn't be -- it would be
3 appropriate under ESSER if they were to hire somebody in
4 response to COVID, right? This has to be a response to
5 COVID, not a supplanting of our localized -- you know,
6 requirement that you provide health services.

7 So you couldn't -- you know, say, "I'm going to
8 hire a nurse to provide localized health services." You
9 could hire, you know, health services, whether that be a
10 nurse or through a contract or something like that, to
11 respond to COVID, absolutely.

12 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay, thank you, thank you. I
13 appreciate the answers. Thank you.

14 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Representative Wallner.
15 Our next two questions.

16 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Actually, can I just --
17 can I throw one more thing out there? So -- I'm sorry about
18 that, Director Little, but I mean I would tell you that so
19 Title IV-A funds allow for student wellness funding as well,
20 and so, there's support there, but you'd have to be very
21 cautious about supplanting there as well.

22 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Commissioner. Our next

1 two questions will be in order from Senator D'Allesandro and
2 then Senator Reagan. And just so you know, Representative
3 Wallner, Commissioner Shibinette is also holding on the line
4 to answer your question that you posed yesterday I believe
5 it was, relative to testing equipment at schools.

6 Senator D'Allesandro?

7 [Pause]

8 Senator D'Allesandro?

9 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Okay, I'm ready to go.

10 Thank you, Jerry. Commissioner, when you talked about the
11 Title funds, those are specific funds given to schools that
12 have manifested specific needs. So when you talk about lots
13 of money, that's specific money designated for a specific
14 purpose to a specific institution.

15 That -- I think that needs clarity, because if you
16 talk about x numbers of dollars are available: Yes, they
17 are, but there's a specific need for those funds that those
18 funds are addressing. So I just want to --

19 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yeah, so let me -- yeah, I
20 agree with you, Senator. I think that that's appropriate.
21 And I thought I was relatively clear about that. So for --
22 but what I would tell you is, for example if I take my Title

1 I funds as an example --

2 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right.

3 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: -- those Title I funds are
4 typically used to provide interventions for students who may
5 be struggling in some of my Title I schools, but those
6 typical interventions that take place are interventions that
7 take place in a traditional instructional model. As we know
8 that (sic) we we're not in a traditional instructional model
9 now --

10 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right.

11 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: -- so we can redeploy
12 those in creative ways that meet the requirements of Title
13 I, but also are responsive to the pandemic learning
14 circumstances that we find ourselves under. And that's what
15 I wanted to encourage and emphasize.

16 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Good. That clarity is very
17 important, because I think for the Board to understand that
18 Title I monies are spent for a specific purpose. You may be
19 able to adjust them because of the pandemic, but those
20 monies are allocated to Title I schools.

21 And second, my second question has to do with
22 VLACS, and people have to understand that VLACS was

1 supposedly a methodology that was put in place to aid
2 schools that couldn't hire particular teachers for
3 particular subjects.

4 Our schools may be overusing VLACS in terms of
5 satisfying all of their virtual requirements; I don't think
6 VLACS was set up for that, is that correct?

7 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So the objective of VLACS
8 -- it can serve as a public charter school in New Hampshire
9 for a student to go full-time, but otherwise I believe
10 you're right, and you were probably more involved even than
11 I was in the beginning of that, that it is suppose
12 supplement the educational offerings of the district.

13 And so, that is what we're encouraging districts
14 to do; to use it to support their educational and
15 instructional models, not supplant it or not be in lieu of.
16 And so, that's the direction that we are encouraging, yes.

17 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Okay, thank you. Thank
18 you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: I guess I'm going to point
20 one other thing out, only Senator Lou because you have --
21 you know, you brought up the technology. But another good
22 application of these Title funds, and I mentioned it once

1 but I'll mention it again -- again, we've got \$10.6 million
2 dollars of Title IV a funds, and we have a waiver from the
3 federal government that allows us to deploy that for
4 technology. So that is a good use of those funds, if we've
5 got to get a bunch more Chromebooks in.

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Sure. I appreciate that.
7 I think that's wise thinking. And certainly, we know given
8 the situation that's been presented to us, the virus, that
9 that kind of innovative thinking is very important to use
10 the dollars properly, because we have some significant
11 challenges that have to be addressed.

12 No, thank you.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Back to you, Senator D'Allesandro.
14 Our next question is from Senator Reagan, and then Senator
15 Soucy. Senator Reagan, go ahead.

16 SENATOR REAGAN: Thanks, Jerry. I just received a
17 communication from President Southerton from the Alliance of
18 Charter Schools. His wife is in the hospital with a medical
19 emergency and he is with her.

20 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you for that information, and
21 we'll send prayers to Mr. Southerton's wife. Sorry to hear
22 that. Thank you for sharing that. Senator Soucy, do you

1 have a question for Commissioner Edelblut? And then we'll
2 be going to commissioner Shibinette next after that.

3 Senator Soucy?

4 [Pause]

5 You may be on mute, Senator Soucy?

6 [Pause]

7 Senator Soucy are you there, and do you have a
8 question for us?

9 [Pause]

10 We may have lost Senator Soucy, I'm afraid. Are
11 any other further questions for Commissioner Edelblut? I
12 don't see anybody raising their hands, so Commissioner,
13 thank you very much.

14 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Great. Thank you all, and
15 I want to just use this opportunity to shout out and thank
16 all of our teachers and our superintendents and
17 administrators across the state who are really working very
18 hard for a smooth transition to our in-person instruction
19 this fall.

20 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Commissioner. I think I
21 heard Senator Soucy in the background?

22 SENATOR SOUCY: Yes.

1 JERRY LITTLE: Senator, are you --

2 SENATOR SOUCY: Thank you, Commissioner. Thank
3 you, Commissioner. I'm sorry, I had a little technical
4 difficulty, I got bumped for a moment. I just -- I have two
5 questions. One is just a point of clarification if I may,
6 Commissioner.

7 So if a district has insufficient funds and they
8 get a waiver, where are the funds coming from? Are the
9 funds coming from the state, or are they making it up within
10 the district, somehow?

11 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So there's a couple of
12 sources for funds that may come through these requests. So
13 again, it's if it's -- and I'll just read the language right
14 out of the emergency order -- if the school district's
15 budget is insufficient to fund expenditures associated with
16 addressing the COVID pandemic, the governing bodies
17 authorized. Once authorization from the Department of
18 education has been maintained, to make such expenditures to
19 the extent other revenues or unrestricted fund balance are
20 available to meet those expenses.

21 So in the case of the two requests that I have,
22 one of the districts has -- and as probably you're familiar

1 with -- districts, many districts have what are referred to
2 as reserve funds.

3 So they aside between two and a half and five
4 percent of their budget on an annual basis into a reserve
5 fund, and they make that request, and they can access those
6 funds. And that is an RSA-11 kind of a process.

7 The other requests that I have had -- and again, I
8 haven't gotten a lot of these, but the other one I have --
9 is that there were funds that were unexpended in the last
10 budgetary period. So they lapsed those funds, and they're
11 asking to gain access to those funds from the previous
12 budgetary period that were unspent.

13 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay. That's helpful. Thank
14 you for that. And then the last part, Commissioner, was
15 just regarding EO #48 and the assessments that need to be
16 completed, are you granting any waivers for those, or have
17 you received waiver requests for those?

18 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So #48 you're saying
19 relative to completion of assessments?

20 MARY JANE WALLNER: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: So we don't have -- I
22 mean, the Executive Order says -- the Executive Order when

1 in place, I believe it was in May and asked that those
2 evaluations of our special education students be completed
3 no later than September 30, or 30 days after the start of
4 the school period.

5 And so, there is -- I have -- I don't have the
6 ability to offer a waiver to that. What we have done is
7 issue a technical advisory to the districts that tells them
8 -- because it is possible that they could do the
9 assessments, but they don't know what the results are;
10 they're going to take a little bit of time.

11 So we're not asking them for their definitive
12 results on that day, we're saying that it will be a period
13 of time that you'll then be able to submit those results to
14 us, but that the assessments we're looking for completion by
15 that date.

16 So they've really been working on these -- you
17 know, for many of our districts, they've been working on
18 them since last May, and with these students to make sure
19 that they do an assessment and an evaluation for those
20 students with special needs to make sure that we're not
21 creating -- you know, learning gaps and they're not falling
22 behind.

1 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay. So it is your position
2 that you're not able to grant waivers beyond the 30 days?
3 The only extension beyond 30 days would be compiling
4 results, or finalizing results, but the assessment itself
5 has to be done within that time?

6 COMMISSIONER EDELBLUT: Yes. That's our
7 understanding and our technical advisory that's out on us.

8 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you.

9 JERRY LITTLE: And thank you very much,
10 Commissioner Edelblut, for joining us this afternoon. And
11 Commissioner Shibinette, I believe you are with us this
12 afternoon.

13 So first I owe you an apology. We sent you a text
14 about 20 minutes ago saying we thought we were going to be
15 early and ready for you and you jumped on the line. And
16 here now I am three minutes after your allotted time at
17 3:10. So please accept my apology for that.

18 I hope we didn't waste your time this afternoon.
19 Representative Wallner, Commissioner Shibinette is with us
20 at your request. Do you want to introduce or intro this
21 discussion?

22 COMMISSIONER SHIBINETTE: Well, I would just say

1 that about a week ago or a little longer than that, I wrote
2 to the Commissioner and asked her if she could provide us
3 some information about the rapid testing machines, and
4 whether they could be available -- made available in the
5 school.

6 She provided me with some really excellent
7 information, and I do hope that her letter has been provided
8 to the other members of this committee. She outlined in the
9 letter some problems with obtaining the machine, but that
10 there may be a small number of them available to us.

11 And she did outline an alternative to having one
12 at every school. She did bring us an alternative plan of a
13 community testing kind of plan. And I think maybe if she
14 could just speak to it and tell us about these rapid testing
15 machines and what their availability is, and what benefit
16 these would be for not just schools, but to all of our
17 communities.

18 Thank you.

19 MARY JANE WALLNER: And thank you, Commissioner
20 Shibinette, for coming and for providing the materials.

21 COMMISSIONER SHIBINETTE: No, thanks for inviting
22 me. So the request was to really explore whether we could

1 put our rapid testing machines in the schools or in the
2 school districts. And, you know, not all rapid testing
3 machines are made equal. There are some testing machines
4 that require any negative test to be followed up with a
5 regular PCR test.

6 There are some machines like the one that I spoke
7 about in my letter, the Quidel Sophia, that does not require
8 a second test if for a negative result. So we would always
9 -- you know, err on that side of testing equipment when it
10 comes to rapid testing, so that we're only doing testing
11 once.

12 So we reached out to Quidel to ask them about
13 procuring machines. And as you can imagine, every area of
14 the country right now is interested in this type of
15 equipment. And I think that's going to change. I think
16 that -- you know, our testing capabilities today are
17 different than they were in June, which were different than
18 they were in March, and I expect that they'll be different
19 again in October, November. I think that -- you know, as
20 more time goes by, companies are able to get approval for a
21 variety of machines.

22 So right now, you know, we feel that the Quidel

1 Sofia is probably the better machine on the market. So
2 we've reached out to them, and as we expected, you know, the
3 -- right now, you know, the federal government is getting a
4 lot of the allocation of the rapid testing machines.
5 They're trying to outfit a lot of states with them.

6 And then there's states that have come together to
7 purchase some. And we do have some here in New Hampshire
8 that were purchased -- usually privately; a hospital or some
9 type of center.

10 So what I found is that the analyzer itself costs
11 about \$2000 dollars, and that the tests come in kits, \$575
12 for a 25-test kit. The cost is not the issue. The issue is
13 the availability of the analyzers, and what Quidel told us
14 is that depending on when we order, they may be able to get
15 20 to us in either October and November, and maybe 20 -- you
16 know, down the road after that, after a month or so.

17 But they're really basing that on what their
18 demand is right now for this machine. And I think what
19 we're finding is that with all the college campuses starting
20 back up and public schools starting back up, they're just
21 having more demand for this equipment.

22 So I do think that if we wanted to procure 20

1 machines, that we could probably get them in October or
2 November. We're not going to get them in time for school to
3 start.

4 There would be -- I can't imagine that we could
5 get \$650 machines for all schools until probably at least a
6 year. And then hopefully COVID will have dissipated by the
7 name of.

8 And then the other alternative I looked at was the
9 185 school districts in the state. Could we open the school
10 district with a machine? But I don't think we could obtain
11 enough analyzers to outfit 185 school districts.

12 So what -- the alternative I proposed is that
13 recently over the last three or four weeks, we have moved a
14 lot of our community-based testing back to our hospitals.

15 And there are reasons why we did this -- mainly
16 because we want to put testing back with a very strong
17 intersect with primary care. So, you know, when we ran our
18 testing centers, we did a great job, we had great volume.
19 The National Guard did -- you know, really did fantastic,
20 but we cut out the position from that process, right?

21 So someone that is positive and gets appears test
22 result would then need to call their physician's office and

1 say, "Oh, by the way, you know, I had a test done, and I had
2 a positive result."

3 By moving this back to the health care system, we
4 involve the primary care physician right from the beginning.
5 And that is the goal for this.

6 So with standing up hospital-based community
7 testing, we have 20 or so -- you know, we still have some
8 hospitals coming online. So I -- you know, I put the round
9 figure of 25 community testing centers there. And we
10 probably could procure enough analyzers through October and
11 November to outfit those 25 with a Quidel Sofia antigen
12 test.

13 The limiting factor has always been with our rapid
14 test, is the test kits or the supplies. And that is the
15 unknown at this point.

16 Typically what happens with this date, and we were
17 on this program with the Abbott ID machine -- is that we get
18 an allotment every month that says, you know, "New Hampshire
19 has this prevalence rate of COVID. We are going to ship you
20 x number of test kits each month, and we get those from
21 Abbott every month for Abbott ID."

22 And just in the last couple of weeks they reduced

1 the number of test kits we got, because our prevalence rates
2 are so much lower than the rest of the country.

3 These companies are supplying the entire country
4 with testing machines and test kits. And although the
5 northeast right now has relatively low prevalence numbers,
6 the rest of the country is seeing, you know, increasing
7 prevalence numbers.

8 So, the impact on the rest of the country
9 definitely hits home here to New Hampshire. So if the
10 Committee wanted to make a recommendation to procure rapid
11 test machines and kits, my recommendation would be to fund
12 25 of them for the community testing centers.

13 And so, I put that at an approximate cost of
14 \$50,000 and then about \$345,000 in the cost of the test kits
15 for the next six to nine months. And that is what I would
16 try to procure. Like I said, I have no guarantees that I
17 will be able to procure enough test kits to maintain
18 services on these machines long term.

19 I think we will get a supply of them. I think
20 we'll be put on a schedule to get additional test kits, but
21 as new hotspots crop up across the country, we very well
22 could be -- you know, they could reduce the number of kits

1 we get, because we really focus on getting the equipment to
2 the most affected areas.

3 And this worked to our advantage back in April,
4 May, June, when the northeast was seeing the high numbers.
5 Many people prioritized -- many companies, PPE equipment;
6 prioritized getting supplies to the northeast, because
7 that's where they were seeing the numbers. It has now
8 flipped, and we're not in that same position anymore.

9 So my recommendation would be to attempt to
10 procure the machines and the tests for the 25 community
11 testing centers. So total cost of that recommendation is
12 \$395,000.

13 JERRY LITTLE: And thank you very much,
14 Commissioner. Rhonda Hensley just sent out Commissioner
15 Shibinette's response to Representative Wallner I believe
16 that's -- yes, it's Representative Wallner and Senator
17 D'Allesandro. My fault that it didn't go out sooner, but
18 you should have it in your e-mails now.

19 Are there questions for Commissioner Shibinette?

20 [Pause]

21 Senator D'Allesandro, your question, sir?

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: My question is, based on

1 your statement, commissioner, you recommend that we make
2 395,000 available to buy these kits and place them in the
3 areas that you have suggested, and your recommendation, or
4 your statement is that we could get those by October, is
5 that correct?

6 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: The company has told us
7 that they could make available 20 analyzers between October
8 and November, and then additional analyzers after November.
9 So it would be somewhere between October and November that -
10 - right, you know, when we asked them last week, that was
11 the information that they gave us.

12 So if -- you know, my recommendation is in
13 response to your request.

14 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: So if what you're trying
16 to accomplish is to get rapid testing availability to public
17 school students, public school teachers -- general community
18 members that need a rapid turnaround, my recommendation is
19 rather than focusing on schools or school districts, really
20 to outfit the community testing centers.

21 Because there are other obstacles to school
22 testing also. You know, some of the things that I talked

1 about in my letter was you need CLIA certification to do
2 testing.

3 So schools that don't have CLIA certification --
4 and this is a lab certification -- would need to get it or
5 request a waiver. That -- you know, for all of those school
6 districts that could take a very long time.

7 The need for a very specific setup in a school
8 area that is outfitted with full PPE and to prevent cross-
9 contamination of machine and testing supplies.

10 So there are inherent obstacles in trying to set
11 up this type of testing in an area that is not set up for
12 testing. So it would make more sense and be more prudent to
13 put them in the community testing centers who have already -
14 - you know, we provided funding to these community testing
15 centers in the hospital to do the setups.

16 You know, we used money out of a grant that was
17 provided to public health to assist the hospitals to set up
18 their testing centers. So that funding has been spent, and
19 the community testing centers have done what's necessary to
20 set those up, so I think we should take full advantage of
21 those testing centers.

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Oh, thank you. Then I

1 would -- if it's appropriate, I would make a move that we
2 accept the commissioner's recommendation and allocate
3 \$395,000 to get the community-based testing and put them at
4 the centers. That makes a great deal of sense to me, and
5 given the magnitude -- you know, the problem and how we can
6 address it.

7 And it is addressing the request that Maryjane and
8 I brought forward. So -- and thanks for the response, I
9 just read the letter a few minutes ago. And I would hope
10 that we would react positively to that suggestion.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Commissioner Shibinette, this is
12 Jerry at the GOFERR office. Is the \$395,000 figure for an
13 entire year, or is that between now and December 30, keeping
14 in mind that CARES Act funds as they get allocated need to
15 be spent by December 30 of this year.

16 MARY JANE WALLNER: So the \$395, so the \$50,000
17 for the cost of the analyzers would be before December 31;
18 the \$345 was split over several -- about six months' worth.
19 So it would go beyond December 31st, but we can certainly --
20 and I don't know if CARES Act allows you to commit the
21 dollars, or the dollars actually have to be paid.

22 So we can enter a contract with Quidel to commit

1 the dollars and encumber the money before December 31 for
2 the remainder of the year in 2021, but if that's sufficient
3 for CARES Act, there doesn't actually have to be spent.

4 JERRY LITTLE: So I am going to defer to GOFERR
5 General Counsel Nancy Smith at this point. Nancy?

6 NANCY SMITH: There would be to be a reasonable
7 expectation that you could obtain the equipment this year,
8 if for reasons totally beyond your control you can't get it,
9 then there may be some flexibility there. But if you know
10 you're not going to be able to obtain it until next year, I
11 think it would be a very questionable expense.

12 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Nancy.

13 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you.

14 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Wallner, do you have
15 a question?

16 MARY JANE WALLNER: I was just going to second
17 Senator D'Allesandro's motion for \$395,000 so that we can go
18 forward with ordering the machines, which it sounds like
19 they could be here by October; we might have them here in
20 October, and get the testing up and running.

21 I just had -- I did have one other question. I
22 just wanted to make sure I understand. All the testing

1 sites are in hospitals, is that correct?

2 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Nope, they're not all in
3 hospitals. The majority of them are I would say probably 18
4 to -- right around 18. And I'm -- that's a moving number
5 for us right now, because we still have hospitals that we're
6 negotiating with.

7 So some hospitals, instead of setting up testing
8 centers within the hospital they contracted with, like a
9 primary care physician's office to do it. So we have, like
10 a PCP office that has got three different sites that are
11 doing the testing for those communities. But the same setup
12 as a testing center.

13 So we have some hospitals chose to use their
14 Urgent Care site. Some are using the hospital site. So
15 it's a little bit different in every community, but all of
16 the sites are operational as a testing site, which is the
17 important part.

18 MARY JANE WALLNER: And Commissioner, do you feel
19 that the state is well covered, or do we have -- is there
20 still a problem, to have distance would be an issue?

21 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: So the only area that is
22 not -- that will not be well covered by a community testing

1 center as of, you know, next week, is the Concord area. But
2 we have continued to operate our National Guard based
3 testing center in Concord, since we don't have coverage
4 through the hospital.

5 So the only thing we would need to do is make sure
6 that our testing site in Concord would have the appropriate
7 equipment and certification to be able to utilize that, or
8 we could send those tests to the public health lab and have
9 the Sofia Quidel in the public health lab to do the testing
10 on site. And because it's Concord, it is very -- you know,
11 it's five minutes away.

12 So there are different options for our Concord
13 area, but all the other areas of the state are covered.

14 MARY JANE WALLNER: Great. Thank you very much.
15 I appreciate your -- really, I appreciate all the work that
16 you've put into doing this in such a short amount of time.
17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Mm-hm.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. Senator Morse, do you
20 have a question, sir?

21 SENATOR MORSE: Yes. I'd just like to clarify.
22 I'm hearing two different things here. One, I'm hearing

1 that we can only acquire 20 machines for sure before the end
2 of the year.

3 And Nancy basically said that our -- what we
4 allocate should be for what we reasonably can spend by the
5 end of this year. Is that 20 machines, or is that more?

6 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: So I believe that at
7 most, we'll be able to get 25 machines by the end of the
8 year, which is why I put that number into my recommendation.
9 When it comes to the test kits, which are always the
10 limiting factor for these machines, I certainly can put in
11 an order to order all the test kits now for the remainder of
12 the school year, which is what I was using -- like, through
13 June 30. I just don't know that we will receive them all
14 before December 31.

15 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay.

16 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Because what they
17 typically do is, they send a monthly allotment based on your
18 order.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Nancy, can you respond to that?

20 NANCY SMITH: I think you could order -- or get
21 enough kits that will take you through an estimated usage
22 through the end of this year. But you can't start trial for

1 next year -- for after the thirtieth, 2020.

2 JERRY LITTLE: Commissioner, can you tell us what
3 that looks like? It would be 25 machines, how many kits,
4 and what would the total dollars be?

5 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Yeah. I can get you
6 those numbers before the end of the week.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Very good.

8 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: I'll have to go back and
9 rerun my calculations on tests per community center, and how
10 many weeks to procure. So yeah, I can get you those numbers
11 through the end of this calendar year, by Friday.

12 SENATOR MORSE: And Commissioner, I had one
13 follow-up question. These community center, do any of them
14 currently have this technology? Commissioner, I'm not aware
15 that any of them have the Sofia Quidel. I -- and that can
16 change, because the hospitals can certainly order those
17 machines.

18 But they're not using them at the testing center;
19 they may have them within the hospital laboratory, but
20 they're not using them as the community testing site, as
21 they're taking those specimens and they have contracts with,
22 like, Quest Lab, LabCorps, things like that.

1 Many of the hospitals have either rapid or quick
2 turnaround time machines. So the Sofia Quidel is just one
3 of them. There is a variety of other machines that have,
4 like, one-hour turnaround. They're not generally using them
5 for asymptomatic testing, which is what we are talking about
6 right now is asymptomatic testing in a general community
7 testing center.

8 So they may have a machine, but they're not using
9 them in the center.

10 SENATOR MORSE: Thank you.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Are there any further questions for
12 Commissioner Shibinette. Representative Hinch, do you have a
13 question, sir?

14 DICK HINCH: Yes, thank you. Thank you,
15 Commissioner as well. So if I heard the conversation
16 correctly, the machines would come to \$50,000 and we have a
17 very reasonable expectation that we could order and procure
18 those before the end of the year. What I also heard was
19 that the test kits, which is \$345,000, is a year's supply.

20 And so, if it is in fact a year's supply and we're
21 not able to stockpile, which is what I heard, would it then
22 be reasonable to say that we're really looking at something

1 on the idea of \$29,000 a month to take us through the end of
2 the year, versus -- per month, that is -- versus \$345,
3 Commissioner?

4 COMMISSIONER SHIBINETTE: The test kits number was
5 derived from when I expected to get the machines in through
6 the end of the school year, so June of 2021. So I'll have
7 to go back and check my figures. So those test kits are
8 through -- I would say November through June 30, so not 12
9 months. That's why I want to rerun the numbers.

10 DICK HINCH: Okay, but for the purposes -- thank
11 you, Commissioner, for that -- but the motion that's on the
12 floor right now, or in front of us, is for \$395,000. And if
13 I'm hearing the legal part of this correctly, \$395,000 would
14 be too much for us to allocate. It would have to be some
15 other number. So that motion would be inappropriate. Would
16 you agree, commissioner?

17 COMMISSIONER SHIBINETTE: Yes.

18 DICK HINCH: And of course we're trying to --
19 thank you -- and we're trying to deal with this today and
20 recognizing that, you know, you need to really put the pen
21 to paper at this point, but it really feels like we should
22 be authorizing some number significantly less than \$400,000,

1 and then come back and revisit it if we need to in our
2 meeting next month.

3 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Yeah. So if I just run
4 the numbers quickly -- sorry. Sometimes I get COVID brain -
5 -

6 DICK HINCH: That's okay.

7 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: -- and things don't work
8 quite as quickly as what I would anticipate them to work.

9 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Well, take your time
10 because we want the right answer.

11 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: I would say that if you
12 authorized \$120,000 that that would provide -- let me rerun
13 those.

14 [Pause]

15 So \$170,000 would get us the machines and
16 approximately two months' supply of -- two to three months'
17 supply of the test kits.

18 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: And when you say three
19 months, you say that would be consummated before the
20 thirtieth of December, so this would fit --

21 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Right.

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: -- the guidelines of the

1 spend?

2 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: So it's going to be
3 October, November, December. Most likely the main testing
4 would happen November or December. Because even if we got
5 the test kits in October, we are talking about a validation
6 process that has to happen with every machine.

7 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I would then ask that amend
8 my motion so that my motion is consistent with the numbers
9 that you have brought forward, and that that money without
10 being expended by the thirtieth of December, so that we
11 could --

12 DICK HINCH: Senator, I wonder if it makes sense
13 to authorize the \$50,000 to buy the equipment and also
14 authorize the purchase of test kits that will be used before
15 the end of December. Remember that the Governor's Office
16 can pull whatever number they want for this.

17 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: True.

18 DICK HINCH: And we do not. So I think if we --
19 if our intention is to buy all the test kits we can buy
20 before the end of the year, that would accomplish both
21 things you're trying to do.

22 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right. And that's a very

1 friendly amendment, Senator Morse. I appreciate that

2 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Yes. What is time
3 sensitive for me is the authorization to purchase the
4 analyzers, because that's the point to take the most lead
5 time. Like, I want to get that order in today if I can.

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Sure --

7 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: -- to get the 25
8 analyzers ordered, because that has the lead time in it.

9 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right.

10 DICK HINCH: Commissioner, \$25-\$50,000; is that an
11 appropriate number?

12 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Yes.

13 SENATOR MORSE: I think, just so that this is
14 clear, Lou --

15 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes.

16 SENATOR MORSE: -- maybe you should state your
17 motion. If they can agree then to buy the 25 machines, and
18 by enough testing kits to get us through December 31, 2020.

19 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right, right. Yeah, sure.
20 I think to clarify, to make it as clear as possible, the
21 machines, the dollar amount for the machines and for the
22 test kits that would be used by the thirtieth of December of

1 this year, so that we comply with the rules and regulations
2 of the CARES Act.

3 So if that meets the guidelines that you just
4 brought forward, I'm in perfect agreement with that. I
5 think it makes a lot of sense.

6 SENATOR MORSE: Well, I think the executive Branch
7 would understand that. Can we -- just so we're clear here,
8 though, can we remove the original motion?

9 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yeah, I'll withdraw the
10 original motion.

11 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: I'll withdraw the second.

12 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thanks, Maryjane. And
13 we'll submit the -- go ahead, Chuck, go ahead.

14 SENATOR MORSE: Does everyone understand Senator
15 D'Allesandro's motion?

16 JERRY LITTLE: Would you like me to try to restate
17 it?

18 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes, sure.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Morse and Senator
20 D'Allesandro, as I understand the new motion, it is to
21 recommend the expenditure of \$50,000 as soon as possible to
22 acquire 25 Quidel Sophia test machines, and to purchase

1 enough test kits to operate those machines through December
2 30 of 2020, and that Commissioner Shibinette will give us
3 that dollar figure for the test kits by the end of the week.
4 Did I state that properly?

5 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes, yes. Chuck, do you
6 agree with that?

7 SENATOR MORSE: Yes. I think it's clear enough.

8 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yeah, it's clear enough.
9 Great. So that is the motion.

10 MARY JANE WALLNER: And I'll second.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Any further discussion? Hearing
12 none and seeing nothing on the screen indicating that
13 somebody wants to talk further -- actually Speaker
14 Shurtleff, are you back with us now soon, sir?

15 STEVE SHURTLEFF: I closed my other two meetings
16 to get back with you folks, so I'm back on, commissioner.

17 JERRY LITTLE: I was just about to make the
18 statement that we had seven people, but we now have eight,
19 so glad you can be joining us Mr. Speaker, and we will call
20 the roll on that motion. Everybody is clear as to what the
21 motion is? If you don't (sic), please speak up. All right.
22 Here's the roll.

1 Senator Soucy?

2 DONNA SOUCY: Yes.

3 JERRY LITTLE: Speaker Shurtleff?

4 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yes.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Morse?

6 SENATOR MORSE: Yes.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hinch?

8 DICK HINCH: Yes.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Senator D'Allesandro?

10 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Wallner?

12 MARY JANE WALLNER: Yes.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Reagan?

14 SENATOR REAGAN: Yes.

15 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hennessey?

16 ERIN HENNESSEY: Yes.

17 JERRY LITTLE: That was a unanimous vote in
18 support of the motion.

19 Commissioner Shibinette, thank you very, very much
20 for joining us this afternoon on such short notice; greatly
21 appreciated. And if you would send me the updated figure
22 for the Sofia test kits through the end of December of this

1 year, I will move that recommendation over to the Governor's
2 Office.

3 COMMISSIONER SHIBNETTE: Great. Thank you so much
4 for having me.

5 COLLECTIVE: Thank you.

6 JERRY LITTLE: We are through our agenda to item
7 4), Follow-up discussion on a number of issues. The first
8 item is Fisher Cats funding. This is an item that's pulled
9 forward I think at my last two meetings. Senator
10 D'Allesandro, I believe this one is also you.

11 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yeah, thank you. the fact
12 that we were awaiting a decision by the Board of Alderman.
13 The Board of Alderman in Manchester did delay the payment,
14 but the payment will still happen. But the budget for the
15 city will be affected by the lack of that payment coming on
16 time.

17 I think my plea is -- and I urgently asked for a
18 million dollars, and I gave all of you, I thought, a fairly
19 decent story with regard to the Fisher Cats. You've got a
20 situation where people believe that the Toronto Blue Jays
21 are somehow -- you know, pay for the Fisher Cats. They
22 don't do that. That's all they do is supply the players.

1 And as a result of their decision not to supply the
2 players, there aren't any players, so there aren't any
3 games. So the Fisher Cats have nothing to go on for the
4 year.

5 And that's kind of an unbelievable situation. And
6 I guess it's one of the risks you take when you become a
7 Minor League franchise in the professional baseball
8 association. But the Fisher Cats will lose approximately
9 \$5- to \$6 million dollars this year. There an integral part
10 of the social fabric of Manchester. They have raised over
11 the course of their 15 years in the city lots of money for
12 charities.

13 They do a lot of very, very good important things
14 for the city, they hire a lot of people, they provide for --
15 for example, the high school graduations this year had no
16 place to go, so the Fisher Cats allowed the stadium to used.
17 They're a very significant player in our community. We
18 don't want to lose the franchise.

19 We certainly recognize the fact that maybe we
20 can't do a million dollars, but I hope we can do something
21 to help them. Because they have lost their ability to make
22 any money this year because of the fact that the parent

1 organization -- and that's the supplier of the players --
2 said no players, no games, and you know what's happening at
3 the professional level.

4 They're a very -- they're just a very important
5 player in Manchester. There are a lot of jobs that are
6 involved, and we want them to stay. We don't want that
7 situation to fold. The city did a lot to get that ballpark
8 sustained.

9 Remember, that was a hobo jungle prior to the time
10 that the baseball stadium was built. So it's been an
11 important economic factor for the city of Manchester. So I
12 hope we could support some kind of dollar amount for the
13 Fisher Cats.

14 As I say, it's a very, very significant part of
15 the economy of our city. And they do a lot for the city.
16 They make a lot of contributions -- job, help in terms of
17 those not-for-profits that need -- they've raised a lot of
18 money over the time they've been there. I think they've
19 raised in excess of \$6 million dollars, given charitable
20 contributions to the city.

21 So, I would hope that my colleagues would think
22 about a number and maybe the million is a stretch, but maybe

1 if we could do a half a million or something of that nature,
2 that would be very beneficial to an entity that really does
3 need our help.

4 And we don't want them to fold. We do not want
5 them to fold. They've been in existence for 15 years,
6 they've won two championships, they've been a great employer
7 for the city, they've been a good -- a very good player.

8 And, you know, it's good -- they provide events
9 for people to go to. They're reasonable cost, it's a great
10 way to bring your family out, and that's so important in
11 today's world, you know? Activities that have a reasonable
12 cost and provide good entertainment for families. So we
13 need that. We need that in Manchester; we need that in the
14 state of New Hampshire.

15 So as I say, I hope my colleagues could support
16 that. I know the Fisher Cats need it, and we want to keep
17 them. We want to keep the Fisher Cats in the city of
18 Manchester. That's my point. So rather than a million, I
19 would ask that maybe we allocated \$500,000 to the Fisher
20 Cats.

21 JERRY LITTLE: Any other comments or questions for
22 Senator D'Allesandro? Senator Soucy?

1 STEVE SHURTLEFF: I was going to second Senator
2 D'Allesandro's motion and just state that I know Senator
3 D'Allesandro said a lot about the impact of the Fisher Cats
4 to the city of Manchester -- I actually think they have a
5 lot of impact to the state of New Hampshire, certainly
6 enjoyed by communities from all over this state, from
7 residents all over this state, and it has a significant
8 economy benefit to the entire state. So I would second the
9 Senator's motion.

10 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. Representative Hinch?

11 DICK HINCH: Yes, thank you, Director. So I have
12 agreed to and have respect for the statement that Senator
13 D'Allesandro made, but I would also point out two things. 1)
14 the Board of Alderman did agree to rewrite the conditions of
15 the payment and extended it off to the future.

16 So although I know that Lou is putting a great
17 deal of passion into what he's saying, it's not like the
18 Fisher Cats are going to fold, because the alternative
19 financing was provided for them by the Board of Alderman,
20 and they put the caveat to it that they were happy to do it,
21 although if we were able to pony some money up, then they --
22 you know, wouldn't have to do it to the extent they are.

1 I would also say that we have 100 examples
2 throughout the state of different associations -- we heard
3 some today -- that have need for money as well too. So
4 there is an alternative for the Fisher Cats that is viable
5 for the Fisher Cats.

6 And I think that we need to recognize that and,
7 you know, put a priority to the rest of the money that -- I
8 mean, we're going to be talking about replacing some funding
9 from the Unemployment Fund coming up as well too, and we
10 should not take our eye off the ball on that. So I have a
11 great deal of difficulty supporting the motion. I think
12 it's not needed, because there is a viable alternative.
13 Thank you.

14 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Reagan, you have a
15 question, sir?

16 SENATOR REAGAN: No, my question was answered.

17 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. I don't see any more
18 questions. Anyone else have a question? So we have a
19 motion on the table to provide \$500,000 to the Fisher Cats
20 by Senator D'Allesandro, a second by Senator Soucy.

21 I do have a question. With the payment delayed,
22 is this a general support to the Fisher Cats, not related

1 any longer to their payment to the City of Manchester? So
2 this is general support to the ball team, not as we
3 discussed in the past relative to their contracted payment
4 to the city, is that correct? That sort of changes the
5 underlying purpose.

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I'm not sure. I think has
7 that they would -- if we gave them money, they would remit
8 it to the city, because the city has to make up for the
9 money that they are holding off on receiving from the Fisher
10 Cats.

11 JERRY LITTLE: So is it for COVID-19 related
12 expenses that will be made before December 30?

13 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Certainly.

14 JERRY LITTLE: For lost revenue?

15 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Certainly. The COVID
16 situation has made it impossible for the Fisher Cats to make
17 any money, because the Major club has said there will be no
18 players. They've taken away the resource that allows them
19 to perform their function of being a Minor League franchise.
20 That does not exist. And the Major League franchise has
21 stated that.

22 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. Seeing no further hands

1 raised for the question, we will take a roll call, if you're
2 ready.

3 Senator Soucy?

4 DONNA SOUCY: Yes.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Speaker Shurtleff?

6 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yes.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Chuck Morse?

8 SENATOR MORSE: No.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hinch?

10 DICK HINCH: No.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Lou D'Allesandro?

12 SENATOR D'ALLESSANDRO: Yes.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Wallner?

14 REPRESENTATIVE WALLNER: Yes.

15 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Reagan?

16 SENATOR REAGAN: No.

17 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hennessey?

18 ERIN HENNESSEY: No.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. That is a 4:4 vote.

20 The motion fails.

21 The next item on the follow-up list is masks.

22 Again, I believe this was put on the agenda last month by

1 Senator D'Allesandro.

2 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yes. Thank you, Jerry.

3 Yes, my suggestion was the Governor now has said that
4 everyone should wear masks; that we should make masks
5 available for those who need them -- particularly kids who
6 are -- if you're in a hybrid situation and you're going to
7 school, they're going to need masks. Everybody needs to
8 wear masks, and we should make masks available to the
9 public.

10 Now, when I made the motion initially, there was a
11 negative in that people did not want to recommend to the
12 Governor that we should have masks. And he has now made a
13 decision that we will have masks, and masks will be worn in
14 public places.

15 The question is should we help in terms of
16 supplying these masks? And I think that we should. Right
17 now, the world has seen a demand for masks, and the
18 situation has developed. We have entities competing against
19 one another.

20 If we did purchase masks and made them available
21 to the public, I think we would play a role in that
22 competitive situation, and we would also stave off one of

1 the most significant -- one of the most significant problems
2 with the virus, and that is that it's spread without wearing
3 the mask because the nasal -- the materials from your nose
4 actually are the big providers of the virus.

5 And so, that's my point to my colleagues that we
6 again come up with the money to buy the masks for the
7 public.

8 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Senator. Representative
9 Hinch, I believe you have a question or a comment?

10 DICK HINCH: A comment. So I just want to remind
11 the group that a motion was made for this, which failed.

12 Secondly, with all due respect to Lou, you made
13 the statement that the Governor mandated masks for the
14 state; he has not. His latest Executive Order prescribed
15 guidelines for planned events over 100 people. There is no
16 mask mandate within the state.

17 Although he suggests using masks, there is no
18 mandate, and the Executive Order clearly stated, "Planned
19 events over 100 people." So we've got to be careful what
20 we're saying here.

21 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Well, I guess in answer to
22 that, Representative, I appreciate your comments, but what

1 the Governor has said, you're correct and it's correct that
2 it's people of 100 -- but he's also recommended that
3 everybody should wear a mask. And we all -- I think we, if
4 we have any sense, we are doing that. And we're doing that
5 as a matter of public safety.

6 I know that everyone should be wearing a mask.
7 And I think if that's the case, and if it's a way to save
8 lives, then we ought to think about making masks available.
9 And that's my concern.

10 My concern is the method of spreading this disease
11 is person to person, and it's the nasal passage that
12 provides the bacteria; that's how it's spread. And as it
13 mutates, it becomes even more dangerous. And masks over the
14 nose are the greatest remedy that we have right now to
15 preventing the spread of this dreaded disease.

16 Thank you. I appreciate your comments, and as
17 always thank you for your wisdom.

18 JERRY LITTLE: Any other questions or comments on
19 masks? Did not hear a motion, I don't believe, Senator
20 D'Allesandro?

21 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I'll make a motion. I'll
22 make a motion that we provide money for the public to pay

1 for the payment of masks. And I would suggest that we
2 appropriate \$500,000 to pay for masks.

3 JERRY LITTLE: Is there a second?

4 [Pause]

5 I'm not hearing a second. I'm not seeing any
6 hands going up on the screen.

7 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I guess I'm not having a
8 lot of luck today. I guess I'll have to get a mask.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Representative Hinch, do you have a
10 comment.

11 DICK HINCH: I do, and it wasn't to second the
12 motion, with all due respect. First of all, I have no clue
13 where the \$500,000 number came from. Don't know how many
14 masks that buys, don't know what the distribution of the
15 mask is. I have not heard of any outcry from the public
16 that masks are not available.

17 I can tell you that I have a number of different
18 groups in town that have been making masks, donating masks,
19 and as I'm also seeing the various businesses that are
20 mandating masks, which is absolutely their right, if you
21 don't have a mask, they'll supply a mask.

22 So I think we're just picking -- and I don't mean

1 any disrespect to Lou, because I understand his passion, but
2 we're just picking a number out of the air, and with no
3 method of distribution whatsoever.

4 So I will absolutely not be supporting that motion
5 -- again, with respect, Lou.

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Well, thank you.
7 Appreciate that. Appreciate the comments.

8 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. Not seeing a second.
9 We will move on to the next issue, which is Housing Relief
10 Fund program, and the CAP programs. I think we have
11 Donnalee Lozeau on the phone waiting for a little bit and
12 Chris Santaniello also. But we're first going to hear from
13 Lisa English from the GOFERR staff with the status on the
14 housing programs in the GOFERR. Lisa?

15 LISA ENGLISH: Thank you, Director Little. I
16 know time is getting long, so I'll try and keep this short,
17 but we want to get just a little bit of context about where
18 we're at with this \$20 million-dollar fund, which also has a
19 \$15 million-dollar in reserve, should that level of COVID-19
20 related need exist.

21 As many of you know, the Five Community Action
22 Program agencies immediately worked to stand up this

1 program, to provide CARES Act funding to households that had
2 a drop in income or increase in expenses, due to COVID-19.

3 So as of about a week ago, the CAPS have assisted
4 hundreds of households and have distributed approximately
5 \$1.3 million in aid, consisting of approximately \$550
6 households. Again, those are numbers from last week. We
7 don't have the updated numbers yet.

8 The context of the timing of this program is
9 important. Up until the end of July, most individuals who
10 lost employment due to the pandemic were still receiving the
11 additional \$600 in unemployment benefits -- the enhanced
12 unemployment benefits. And those benefits certainly
13 impacted who might qualify in the beginning weeks of this
14 program.

15 We've heard that there are other organizations
16 that provide housing support that want the CARES Act funds
17 to be used first. But again, this CARES Act funding can
18 only be used where a tenant's financial challenge is a
19 result of COVID-19.

20 The CAP agencies work to assist people who are
21 eligible for this fund, but also those that are not
22 eligible, by finding other programs offered by the CAPS or

1 other community agencies, in an effort to keep these
2 families in their housing.

3 Nevertheless, in response to some of the concerns
4 about the application, the CAPS agencies want a new,
5 streamlined application yesterday. This is something that
6 the CAPS worked on with the VHHS and this office to create
7 this streamlined application, as well as to try and
8 streamline and shorten the process.

9 So the application itself went from what would be
10 printed out an eight-page application down to three pages.
11 And there's no longer an inquiry process where an individual
12 would essentially ask -- fill in a little bit of data to get
13 an application. Instead, the applicant can just go right to
14 the CAPS website and fill out the online application.

15 We believe this new application will allow the
16 CAPSS to provide assistance more quickly, while still
17 ensuring that the funds are used for COVID-19 related
18 relief, as required by federal law.

19 So just a couple of quick points I want to
20 emphasize. We heard a lot of different things -- a couple
21 of misconceptions. 1) Anyone can assist a tenant with the
22 application. And we encourage advocates -- New Hampshire

1 Legal Assistance city and town welfare and other staff --
2 essentially anyone who can be in a supportive role to assist
3 applicants in filling out the application.

4 This will help get assistance to the household
5 more quickly, and also, allow those service providers to
6 identify families that may not qualify for CARES Act money,
7 because it's not a COVID-related financial impact, and that
8 would allow those entities to be able to connect those
9 families with more standard supports earlier.

10 So one other highlight for those that aren't
11 familiar, grants under this program are coupled with
12 regional case management services to help connect households
13 to appropriate services, and I guess the biggest take away
14 that I want to make sure everyone's aware of is we hope the
15 message out there is to encourage people to apply for this
16 program.

17 Because even when a CAP agency is aware of a
18 family in need and they don't fall within the guardrails
19 (sic) of the CARES Act and the Coronavirus Relief Fund,
20 they're finding ways to ensure that those families are able
21 to be housed if they qualify for another program.

22 And so, that's my quick comment -- perhaps not so

1 quick. And I'm sure we can take questions, but I know that
2 we have Donnalee Lozeau on the phone as well, and she likely
3 can fill in the gaps that I have missed.

4 Donnalee?

5 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Hi. How are you?

6 LISA ENGLISH: We're doing great, how are you?

7 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Good. Happy to answer any
8 questions anybody may have. Did you want me to fill them in
9 on anything other than answering questions?

10 LISA ENGLISH: I think if -- are there any
11 questions at this time? Please hit 5 -- [star 5, five
12 star?] Five star -- excuse me, five star if you have a
13 question. I don't see any questions at this time, so I
14 think, Donnalee, if there's no other -- if there's nothing
15 that I missed, I think we can go onto the next agenda item.

16 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Great, thanks. Nice talking to
17 everybody.

18 LISA ENGLISH: Thank you so much.

19 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you, Donnalee. So I think
20 we're actually sticking with you, aren't we Lisa, on the
21 next one? Are we down to evictions? Right, so --

22 LISA ENGLISH: I think we have a couple of guest

1 speakers.

2 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. So on this one, Angela
3 Zhang from Listen. If you could hit 5* Ms. Zhang, so we
4 could figure out which line you are, I think we just
5 identified you. Are you with us, Ms. Zhang? Can you hear us
6 now? Can we hear you?

7 ANGELA ZHANG: Yes, can you hear me?

8 JERRY LITTLE: I can. Very good. And also, we're
9 looking for Lynne Goodwin, Lebanon Social Services HR
10 Director. If you could also 5*, that allows us to identify
11 which line you're calling in on. We've got you right there,
12 perfect. Can you say hello, so we can make sure we have you
13 Ms. Goodwin?

14 LYNNE GOODWIN: Hi, this is Lynne Goodwin. Can
15 you hear me okay?

16 JERRY LITTLE: Wonderful. Thank you very much.
17 This one I'm trying to -- this one came from Speaker
18 Shurtleff, I believe, on behalf of a state representative
19 who got in touch with him, and the message we got from that
20 Representative is folks have concerns about a possible
21 pending foreclosure spike.

22 Would one of you like to -- very good -- one of

1 you could speak to your concern, please?

2 LYNNE GOODWIN: Will do. Good afternoon. I'm
3 Lynn Goodwin, Human Services Director for the City of
4 Lebanon, and also a Board member for Listen Community
5 Services. And I'm joined by Angela Zhang, Program's
6 Director for Listen.

7 We'd like to extend our gratitude to Director
8 Little and the Legislative Advisory Board for giving us your
9 time today, so we can speak to you on behalf of our clients
10 and their experiences with the Housing Relief Program. We
11 want to tell you about some real problems that our clients
12 are experiencing, and ask for some very specific actions on
13 their behalf.

14 We really appreciate this time to speak with you
15 today, and want to thank you for playing such a major role
16 in making sure this program was created at a time of such
17 extraordinary need for so many New Hampshire citizens. We
18 have about 10 minutes of planned testimony for you, and have
19 a written copy which we're happy to submit to you by e-mail
20 if appropriate.

21 We're speaking to you today as representatives of
22 both Listen Community Services and the city of Lebanon.

1 Listen is an invaluable non-profit organization based in
2 Lebanon whose mission is to meet the critical needs of
3 families in the Upper Connecticut River Valley. We help
4 people with food, shelter, utilities, clothing and financial
5 counseling.

6 As you can imagine, the COVID-19 pandemic has put
7 extraordinary pressure on tenants and landlords alike, and
8 the pressure is only getting more intense. Therefore, we
9 come to you today to request that you consider the following
10 actions, and we intend to explain why they're needed.

11 We request an extension of Emergency Order #51
12 extending the eviction cure period for a minimum of 60 days,
13 which would allow tenants time to apply for New Hampshire
14 Housing Relief Funds and be approved or denied.

15 We request a moratorium on foreclosures until at
16 least the end of September, until the CAP agencies can
17 process applications quickly and efficiently. We request a
18 provision that would stay all evictions and foreclosures if
19 an applicant can provide documentation to their landlord or
20 lender that they're currently in the application process for
21 the New Hampshire Housing Relief programs.

22 And we request greater transparency about the

1 status of the program -- how many people have been able to
2 get access to it, the total number of applications
3 submitted, and the total amount of the \$20 million dollars
4 that has been spent so far.

5 ANGELA ZHANG: Hi. This is Angela Zhang from
6 listen. I'd like to share with you in greater detail the
7 experience of one of our clients, Josh, who consented to
8 letting us use his real name. Josh is the very first client
9 whom we also applied for the funding on the very first day
10 his application opened. And he still hasn't gotten his
11 payment approved yet, and his landlord is now pushing to
12 evict him.

13 Josh is a single Dad in Lebanon, New Hampshire,
14 who was furloughed early on in the epidemic and hasn't been
15 able to go back to work yet, because he needs to take care
16 of his two kids.

17 When we heard about the New Hampshire Housing
18 Relief Funds, we encouraged him to apply, and so he came
19 into our office on June 30, the very first day the
20 application was available online, so that we could help him
21 apply, since Josh has limited access to technology.

22 He called us back a week later, saying he hadn't

1 heard anything back. We asked our local CAP agency, which
2 is Tri-County Community Action program; they said they did
3 not see his application in their system, and they told him
4 to apply again.

5 On July 16, we met with Josh in our office again
6 to help him submit his application, scan and upload his
7 supporting documents, and we asked our local Tri-County CAP
8 worker to verify that the application went through. And he
9 told us they hadn't received his application yet because of
10 a computer glitch. So they told Josh to apply again, so we
11 met with Josh on July 29 for a third attempt.

12 On August 18, we finally got confirmation that the
13 CAP agency has the documents they need to approve Josh's
14 application, but as of today, the landlord still hasn't been
15 paid yet; Josh is still terrified that if the payment
16 doesn't come through soon, he and his kids will be homeless
17 and on the street.

18 Josh's fear of being evicted was off the chart,
19 and it was exacerbated by the fact that he was completely in
20 the dark about what was going on. Imagine not knowing how
21 you and your kids will keep a roof over your heads in this
22 crisis.

1 I want to emphasize again that Josh applied on
2 literally the first day the program opened.

3 It's taken him a month and a half to get anything
4 close to an answer, and two months later the landlord still
5 hasn't been paid. We are starting to hear more and more
6 landlords who have worked with their tenant to apply for the
7 Housing Relief Fund wait a week and didn't hear anything
8 back, so now they have no choice but to proceed with
9 eviction.

10 Josh is just one story, but we're hearing this
11 story dozens of times every day. We also heard from many
12 people that they thought they had applied, but the follow-up
13 responses from the CAP agency got caught in their junk mail.

14 Keep in mind that some of our clients are learning
15 how to use e-mail for the first time, and they're still
16 adjusting to our newly remote and virtual world. Many don't
17 have reliable access to Wi-Fi or cell signal in the more
18 rural parts of New Hampshire.

19 Applicants also have to demonstrate that they have
20 either lost income or increased expenses due to COVID, which
21 is its own hurdle. At Listen, we supported clients with
22 scanning and uploading pay stubs, bank statements, mortgage,

1 W-9 forms, receipts, et cetera. because they don't have
2 scanners at home. Only once those documents are submitted
3 does the application count as complete and ready for
4 approval for funding. These barriers can be extremely
5 daunting and even insurmountable.

6 In the absence of clear information about how the
7 process is rolling out, our clients are telling us that even
8 other social service providers are telling them not to
9 bother applying, because it doesn't seem worth the time.

10 LYNNE GOODWIN: This is Lynne Goodwin again. The
11 \$20 million initially allocated to the Housing Relief Fund
12 was meant to be a lifeline for New Hampshire residents. But
13 so far, it has underserved its purpose.

14 Information from the GOFERR Coronavirus Fund
15 Dashboard as of August 14 indicates that only \$2.3 million
16 has been expended, with \$17.7 million remaining in the fund.

17 However, information on the Department of Health
18 and Human Services Division of Economic and Housing
19 Stability COVID-19 data as of August 24 indicates that \$1.3
20 million has been processed for payments statewide, helping
21 555 applicants, and we just heard those stats reported
22 earlier on this call.

1 The discrepancy between the numbers, is it \$1.3
2 million, or is it \$2.3 million? It's confusing, and it
3 leads to more questions than answers. CAP agencies have been
4 working very hard to administer the funds. But as Angela
5 detailed earlier, there have been issues slowing down the
6 process of getting much needed financial assistance out to
7 New Hampshire renters and homeowners.

8 As of August 20, statistics from Tri-County CAP
9 for Lebanon specifically were as follows: 31 applications
10 were received. It's unknown what the total number of
11 inquiries were for Lebanon.

12 Of the 31 applications received, two applications
13 were denied, seven applications were approved, 22
14 applications are still in process. So nine weeks into this
15 program, less than one-third of the applications received
16 from Lebanon have been processed fully.

17 In terms of actual funds provided, one-time
18 assistance grants totaling \$13302 were approved, and short-
19 term rental assistance, which is about three months of
20 initial rent, totaling \$10,576 was approved. So the total
21 of funds approved for Lebanon are \$23,878.

22 Our courts are currently backed up processing

1 evictions that were filed before the moratorium when
2 evictions took place, and that has been a saving grace.
3 However, landlords are growing impatient, and they're
4 beginning the eviction process for tenants who have not
5 cured their back rent from April on. As the courts catch
6 up, current evictions will be processed.

7 We want to be clear that we do not in any way
8 blame the CAP agencies. They were asked to take on a huge
9 program and build a brand-new online system in just a matter
10 of weeks, with only their existing infrastructure, and in
11 the face of overwhelming demand.

12 In the last two weeks, there have been several
13 changes made to the application to streamline the process,
14 and it is great to hear that a streamlined application from
15 eight pages down to three pages is now effective.

16 However, if one goes to the CAPNH.org website
17 right now, you notice that it still starts with an inquiry
18 form, not the actual application, and that has been one of
19 the major issues with this process.

20 It's clear that in order to prevent a potential
21 tidal wave of evictions and foreclosures coming our way, we
22 need time and we need transparency.

1 ANGELA ZHANG: This is Angela Zhang again. So to
2 speak to the first one, if you receive an eviction notice
3 for nonpayment, you have a seven day cure period to pay the
4 amount owed to stop the eviction. Governor Sununu, in
5 listing the moratorium on evictions on July 1 gave tenants a
6 30-day cure period, up until July 31 to catch up on rent,
7 which was a great idea and a very necessary measure.

8 But as you can tell from Josh's story, it can take
9 more than nine weeks for someone to get their application
10 approved through the Housing Relief Fund.

11 We need to make sure that a tenant struggling to
12 make ends meet actually has the time they need in order to
13 get the funds to secure the eviction. Without additional
14 time, landlords will move forward to evict, which will
15 defeat the original purpose of the Housing Relief Fund
16 preventing eviction.

17 And to that end, we would like to humbly suggest
18 1) An extension of Emergency Order #51 extending the cure
19 period for a minimum of 60 days, allowing tenants time to
20 apply for funds and be approved or denied.

21 2) A moratorium on foreclosures until at least the
22 end of September, until the CAP agencies can process

1 applications quickly and efficiently.

2 And 3) a provision that would stay all evictions
3 and foreclosures if the applicant can provide documentation
4 to their landlord or lender that they are currently in the
5 application process for the Housing Relief Funds.

6 And to the second point, transparency. All
7 stakeholders involved need to know what the status of the
8 program is, and how many people have really been able to get
9 access to this resource.

10 For a family that's facing eviction, transparency
11 isn't a buzzword or piece of a strategic plan. It's the
12 difference between whether they will have a roof over their
13 heads, or if they will be living in their car next winter.
14 It is a life or death watch.

15 If there's a significant backlog, or the
16 applications are taking a while to process, then landlords
17 need to know this, so they won't start an eviction
18 proceeding.

19 Right now, there doesn't seem to be any
20 information that's easily accessible on this state website.
21 Ideally, we'd like to see something like a dashboard on the
22 Department of Health and Human Services website, showing the

1 total number of applications submitted, the number of
2 applications and payments approved, et cetera, so that
3 tenants and social service providers can better communicate
4 with landlords about where we are in the process.

5 I see that the GOFERR website has a transparency
6 map, which illustrates other programs like the Nonprofit
7 Emergency Relief Fund. But the Housing Relief Fund is not
8 included in that.

9 I think it's also important to know the geographic
10 distribution of the funds disbursed, since the North Country
11 has historically been underserved by state agencies, due to
12 our rural nature.

13 So extraordinary times call for extraordinary
14 measures. The last thing that we need right now during the
15 deadliest pandemic and worst economy crisis in a century is
16 people being kicked out of their homes and into the streets.
17 The Housing Relief Fund, while a great start to preventing
18 this tidal wave of evictions and foreclosure needs greater
19 time and transparency in order to achieve its stated goals.

20 We are so incredibly grateful to you for your
21 invaluable expertise and the gift of your time today, and as
22 we are all trying to navigate through this crisis and

1 protect the most vulnerable members of our New Hampshire
2 community. If you have any further questions, we're always
3 available to speak with you. Thank you very much.

4 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you both very much for those
5 comments. I'm wondering, is Donnalee Lozeau still on the
6 call?

7 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Yes, I am.

8 JERRY LITTLE: Great. Do you have any reaction to
9 what you just heard?

10 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Well, I guess I would begin by
11 saying that -- speaking on behalf of all five Community
12 Action agencies, we agree that it's critical that these
13 services are delivered. I appreciate that we're being told
14 that, you know, you understand the breadth of this work.

15 I think there's a few things that are important.
16 As we stood up the program, developed the appropriate
17 application, we of course have learned as we move through
18 the process things that cause trouble, things that are hard
19 to overcome, things that could be done better.

20 And so, we have, on a weekly basis, worked with
21 the state and GOFERR staff to do our best to come up with
22 the new streamlined application. You know, we started out

1 trying to make sure that we had as much information as
2 possible, so that people weren't self-selecting out and
3 assuming that they weren't eligible.

4 Because if they're not eligible for these dollars
5 for housing, we have access to other housing dollars that
6 don't have that same eligibility requirement being related
7 to COVID.

8 I would agree that the inquiry versus the
9 application created some confusion, in spite of the fact
10 that we did e-mail clients and let them know to look in
11 their e-mail and their junk folder for the secure link for
12 them to do an application, so that they could upload
13 documents.

14 We also know that our clients don't necessarily
15 have access to all of the same equipment that many people do
16 in New Hampshire, particularly in the North Country with
17 issues surrounding the Internet. And so, paper applications
18 have always been available, and drop-off locations have been
19 expressed to clients.

20 Tri-County in particular was concerned, due to
21 issues relating to people's computers and spotty Internet
22 services. So they've now extended their staff hours to 4:00

1 to 7:00 p.m. at night, to be able to reach people that they
2 may not have been able to reach during the day, and to help
3 walk them through the application.

4 The new streamlined app is up, it went up live
5 yesterday. I don't know when the last time the two speakers
6 had a chance to look at the CAPNH website. The new
7 streamlined application is there.

8 When you click on it, it is not the inquiry form,
9 it is actually the full application. It may look similar to
10 the old inquiry form, but it is still the whole application.
11 And so, we're using that.

12 I was somewhat concerned about the foreclosure
13 issue, in the sense of folks that have home are not
14 typically those that may be accustomed to receiving
15 services, but due to the pandemic might be in a different
16 circumstance.

17 And I looked into it with many of the New
18 Hampshire financial institutions, and the deferment into
19 September for the mortgage, I was concerned that that would
20 mean that come September they'd have to pay, you know, four
21 or five months' worth of mortgage payments and learned that
22 that was not the case; that almost all of the New Hampshire

1 institutions are just adding those months to the end of the
2 mortgage, so that gave a little sigh of relief, as that's a
3 one-time assistance for mortgages.

4 I know it's been a little bit clunky. We at
5 Southern New Hampshire services sent out 3000 letters to
6 landlords. You know, I have received calls myself even as
7 the Executive Director from landlords asking questions, and
8 we're happy to help.

9 We also provide -- and the other CAPS are now
10 doing so -- a letter to the client once they're in the
11 system and processing their application, that they can
12 provide to their landlord to let them know.

13 We at Southern, we cut checks every day, because
14 of our volume. The other four Community Actions cut them
15 once a week. So the client that was referred to earlier, if
16 the application is complete and he's eligible and that was
17 told to him this week, his landlord should be paid by the
18 end of the week from Tri-County.

19 But we're happy to look into these things. I
20 mean, no matter how good a system is, sometimes people, you
21 know, fall off the rails somehow. We had one this morning
22 that had a typo in her name that she put into the system.

1 And so, we're looking for her, based on her inquiry and we
2 can't find her. And so, it took a little bit of work to
3 catch that. But those are things that happen.

4 And we're also finding that the majority of
5 landlords are willing to wait and work with us to make sure
6 that all the information is there.

7 At the end of the day, there are two critical
8 things. 1) We help people to maintain their housing and 2)
9 We're in a position that we can demonstrate through federal
10 audit that we're in compliance. And that's something that
11 all Community Action agencies are very, very familiar with.
12 And that's why we're going the extra mile to make sure that
13 we can confirm that, you know, we met that initial hurdle
14 for COVID.

15 That's where we are.

16 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you very much, Donnalee,
17 really appreciate your insight. We have questions from
18 Representative Wallner, and then Speaker Shurtleff.

19 Representative Wallner?

20 MARY JANE WALLNER: Yes, thank you. This is a
21 question for Donnalee. Donnalee, when the Community Action
22 program took on the program, were you allocated any of the

1 funds to be used for additional staffing? Because I can see
2 that the volume is pretty incredible. Would additional
3 staffing help move some of this along?

4 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Thank you for the question,
5 representative, and I should have spoke (sic) to that when I
6 initially spoke. Absolutely, all of us have hired more
7 staff. The state and GOFERR both provided funding for that
8 purpose right away, and, you know, we've been doing it.

9 At Southern New Hampshire services, we actually
10 are working with a temp agency, and we've been onboarding
11 five new staff every Monday. We're up to 17 staff on this
12 program, and some of it -- it's not necessarily about how
13 many staff you have, it's about getting the proper
14 documentation, reaching the client to have the conversation
15 about what they need and how to get it to us.

16 And we spend per person walking through the
17 application, getting their appropriate documents, on average
18 an hour per client. That's significant. And so, the more
19 simplified that we could make it, we think the better that
20 will help, and we will know that based on yesterday's launch
21 of the new streamlined application.

22 And we're reaching out to folks to let them know

1 that we've put them up there. And that was -- you know,
2 that was really because of our work looking at, okay, what
3 else do we need?

4 And Representative Wallner, we've also reallocated
5 staff in different ways, so we have Fiscal Staff that's
6 working only on processing checks, chasing down W-9s if we
7 don't have them, so that the client doesn't have to do that
8 if it's not easy for them. We've allocated staff that all
9 they do is try to get the paperwork, rather than work
10 directly with the client as far as counseling and helping it
11 get through.

12 So we make those changes as we learn where holdups
13 may be. But all of us have hired new staff and have pivoted
14 seasoned staff into helping to make sure that as much as
15 possible gets processed timely.

16 MARY JANE WALLNER: Thank you. I just have -- I
17 have one further question for Donnalee. Donnalee, if there
18 was something that you could do that would make this process
19 move along more rapidly for the client, what would it be?

20 DONNALEE LOZEAU: The streamlined application that
21 we've just launched. And I hope a week from now I would
22 tell you the same answer.

1 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay, great. Thank you.

2 DONNALEE LOZEAU: You're welcome.

3 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you both very much. Mr.
4 Speaker, you have a question, sir?

5 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yeah, thank you. A question for
6 the Mayor. And I want to thank her for staying on the line.
7 Her comments have been extremely helpful. Donnalee, I heard
8 Ms. Zhang mention three points that you'd like this Board to
9 possibly recommend to the Governor.

10 I think one was to include -- increase the
11 Emergency Order #51 on to be extended for another month, a
12 moratorium on evictions for those who have made a good faith
13 effort to clear up their back payments, and I didn't quite
14 catch the third.

15 But do you think that would be appropriate to make
16 that recommendation for the Governor to give some of these
17 people a little bit of peace of mind, as they have the
18 thought of evictions hanging over their heads?

19 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Well, I think we'd all agree
20 that piece of mind is always a good thing. But, with all
21 due respect Mr. Speaker --

22 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yeah.

1 DONNALEE LOZEAU: -- I'm not a policymaker
2 anymore.

3 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Okay.

4 DONNALEE LOZEAU: And, you know, I am not in a
5 position to recommend to anybody that that be changed.

6 Our job as Community Action is to make sure that
7 people are educated about the work we do and the needs of
8 the clients -- you know, in the true sense. We process at
9 Southern 15,000 fuel applications a season, and that's a
10 pretty well-oiled machine now. I think we can get this
11 program to where we need to get it.

12 You know, if I was to ask for anything, I would
13 ask the landlords to continue to be patient in working with
14 us. The majority of them would rather have their people
15 housed and get paid than go to court and spend the money to
16 get somebody evicted. That doesn't solve the problems.

17 And the majority of landlords are good community
18 citizens. Not all of them -- clearly we all know that, we
19 don't live in the Pollyanna world, but the majority of them
20 don't want to create more problems in their community.

21 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Thank you. And again, thank you
22 for staying on. You've been very helpful with your

1 comments.

2 DONNALEE LOZEAU: You're welcome. I'm happy to
3 help.

4 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Jerry, I wonder if I could ask
5 Ms. Zhang to repeat her three recommendations again?

6 JERRY LITTLE: Certainly, and we will write them
7 down. But I will just -- as I wrote to you on an e-mail,
8 Mr. Speaker, we're a bit outside of the charge that GOFERR
9 received in the Governor's Executive Order 2020-06, which
10 limits our authority as the Legislative Advisory Board to
11 developing recommendations for the allocation and
12 expenditure of CARES Act Emergency Relief Funds.

13 And as Donnalee just pointed out, we're drifting
14 into an area of public policy where neither GOFERR nor the
15 lab has any express authority created under the Executive
16 Order 2020-06. But we will entertain rehearing the items
17 from Ms. Zhang.

18 ANGELA ZHANG: Hello. This is Angela Zhang. I
19 can repeat those three items. And so, those were an
20 extension of Emergency Order #51, extending the cure period
21 for a minimum of 60 days, allowing tenants time to apply for
22 funds and be approved or denied.

1 2) A moratorium on foreclosures, until at least
2 the end of September, until the CAP agencies can process
3 applications quickly and efficiently.

4 3) A provision that would stay all evictions and
5 foreclosures if the applicant can provide documentation to
6 their landlord or lender that they are currently in the
7 application process for the Housing Relief Fund.

8 And then I guess point number 4 was about
9 transparency and having more information publicly available
10 on the DHHS website. I want to mention that it's been
11 incredibly difficult for me and my colleague Lynne to be
12 able to get this information. We have to get it, like,
13 second or third hand.

14 I have a contact at New Hampshire Legal Aid who
15 has been very helpful in keeping me up to date on what's
16 been going on.

17 You know, and I also want to add that I'm actually
18 currently on the CAPnh.org website, and it's still showing
19 me the old inquiry form that just asks you to submit your
20 household information and -- you know, some quick
21 demographic stats, and then it looks like just finish and
22 ready to submit. It's not the complete application.

1 And I'm --

2 DONNALEE LOZEAU: No, actually -- hold on, I'm
3 sorry, I don't mean to interrupt, but seeing that you're on
4 that site now --

5 ANGELA ZHANG: Yep.

6 DONNALEE LOZEAU: -- at the bottom, as you scroll
7 down on the page that you've talked about -- so I'm looking
8 at Tri-County's right now --

9 ANGELA ZHANG: Yep.

10 DONNALEE LOZEAU: -- there are two green buttons.
11 One is, "Add another household member if you have one," and
12 the other one is "Finish and Ready to Submit." That's on
13 each page. You just keep clicking through and filling it
14 out. That's not the inquiry, that's the full application.

15 ANGELA ZHANG: Okay. That's helpful to know.

16 DONNALEE LOZEAU: Yeah, exactly.

17 ANGELA ZHANG: It looks identical to how it was
18 before.

19 DONNALEE LOZEAU: I understand.

20 ANGELA ZHANG: Yeah. Okay, thank you.

21 JERRY LITTLE: Great.

22 DONNALEE LOZEAU: You're welcome.

1 ANGELA ZHANG: And my last point is also, you
2 know, I'm delighted to hear that things are going really
3 smoothly at Southwest Community Services. You know, I think
4 it's possible that a lot of what we are observing is, you
5 know, the fact that we live in a very rural area.

6 You know, again, I don't mean to throw Tri-County
7 CAP under the bus or anything, but, you know, they have a
8 very large service area and, you know, this is a classic
9 problem with, you know, rural social service delivery which
10 is that, you know, a very large geographic area and not very
11 many staff.

12 So it's great to hear that things are moving
13 smoothly and efficiently in the urban areas, but, you know,
14 I think it doesn't really change the fact that, you know,
15 the clients that we've been working with, you know, at
16 Listen, we literally still don't know of a single person who
17 has actually successfully gotten funding. We've referred
18 dozens of our clients.

19 Like, pretty much every day we're sending people
20 to the CAPNH.org website, encouraging them to fill them out,
21 encouraging them to check their junk mail and their spam
22 filters and to, you know, be patient as they wait to hear

1 back from the caseworker, and we're still just -- we're just
2 not seeing it.

3 And again, in the city of Lebanon, it's seven
4 applicants who have successfully finished their application.
5 And so, that is a real red flag to me. And that's why I'm
6 really concerned and really was hoping to speak to you all
7 today.

8 And it may fall outside of the purview of the
9 Legislative Advisory Board, but, you know, I'm hoping that
10 we can raise some awareness of what -- you know, what our
11 clients and, you know, New Hampshire residents are really
12 going through, especially in the rural areas.

13 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Jerry, I --

14 DONNALEE LOZEAU: If I could --

15 STEVE SHURTLEFF: -- go ahead.

16 DONNALEE LOZEAU: -- this is Donnalee again, I
17 just want to add one other thing. I don't -- so this is
18 Southern New Hampshire Services, not Southwestern, but I'm
19 sure they're -- you know, they appreciate it too, but --

20 ANGELA ZHANG: My apologies.

21 DONNALEE LOZEAU: -- it is not running smoothly
22 and efficiently here in the sense of everything's coming up

1 roses. We are learning as we go. We are adjusting to try
2 to meet what we think creates problems.

3 So it's not as smooth and perfect as all of us
4 would like, but what's important is learning -- we are all
5 five Community Actions work together, and we -- you know,
6 steal the zeal from each other, the things that work well.
7 We try to make things consistent, straight through all five
8 of us.

9 But I just don't want to leave the impression that
10 everything is great here, and sorry Tri-County's not working
11 out. I think we're all, you know, doing the best that we
12 can night and continue to do so and appreciate people that
13 help out, and support the clients the way you've described.

14 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Jerry, if I could just add one
15 thing?

16 JERRY LITTLE: Sure. You know, I don't want to go
17 out of the scope of our mandate from the Governor, but if
18 you could bring the concerns that we've heard this afternoon
19 to his attention and ask the Governor to look into this and
20 do whatever he can do.

21 And we know Tri-County takes up a large geographic
22 area of the state in mostly rural areas, including [03:40:01

1 indiscernible proper name] and Northern Grafton County as
2 well as Southern Grafton.

3 You know, if we do that, I think that would be
4 much appreciated by those in the Tri-CAP area.

5 JERRY LITTLE: So we have not sent anything to the
6 Governor that was not CARES Act funding related, but what I
7 have done on an occasional basis is when I've received
8 something of a public policy nature directed or addressed to
9 me or him, and I have been copied to it, I've brought it to
10 his attention in that manner.

11 So I think what would work best and would be
12 consistent with previous performance would be if Ms. Zhang
13 and Ms. Goodwin would write me a letter -- Director of the
14 GOFERR Office -- with their four requests. I will forward
15 it to the Governor and make sure that he and his staff see
16 it.

17 STEVE SHURTLEFF: That would be fine. That would
18 be much appreciated.

19 JERRY LITTLE: So as long as Ms. Zhang --

20 ANGELA ZHANG: This is Angela again. We can
21 definitely do that. And I'd be happy to also include the
22 copy of the testimony that Linda and I just presented today.

1 JERRY LITTLE: That would be perfect. Thank you.

2 COLLECTIVE: Thank you.

3 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: And Jerry, just a couple of
4 quick comments. I think Donnalee did a great job of
5 explaining what's happening. Southern New Hampshire
6 Services has changed the form. I think that was
7 appropriate. They did that expeditiously.

8 I talked with Legal Assistance this morning about
9 the work that Southern New Hampshire is doing in getting the
10 money out the door, and they have been getting it out as
11 quickly as possible. So kudos to Southern New Hampshire
12 Services as one of the CAP agencies that's leading the way.
13 And I think the others can work with them and make this
14 work.

15 But indeed, I know that a lot of money has gone
16 out the door from Southern New Hampshire, and I applaud the
17 management of Southern New Hampshire, and I might say that I
18 am Vice Chairman of the Board of Southern New Hampshire
19 Services, and I'm in contact with our Executive Director,
20 Donnalee Lozeau on a frequent basis and following up on
21 these things.

22 And I might say that the form is the key.

1 Donnalee and Southern New Hampshire changed the form. It's
2 much easier to work with now, and I think that's --
3 nothing's perfect, but boy that's a way to solve the
4 problem. It's the beginning of the path to solving the
5 problem.

6 So I don't think we can throw any of the CAPS
7 under the bus. They're doing what they can do, and doing it
8 as effectively as they can, and it's not an easy job.

9 You know, you're given a tremendous amount of
10 work, and that's got to be done, and you're dealing with a
11 clientele that needs your help. And I think that they're
12 reacting to it in a very fine fashion. So I don't want to
13 it to go by the boards that they aren't doing their job.
14 Thank you.

15 JERRY LITTLE: You're welcome. Thank you, Senator
16 D'Allesandro, and thank you very much Donnalee, and thank
17 you to the ladies from up in Lebanon.

18 DONNALEE LOZEAU: You're welcome.

19 LYNNE GOODWIN: This is Lynne Goodwin.

20 JERRY LITTLE: So the last thing --

21 LYNNE GOODWIN: Excuse me.

22 JERRY LITTLE: You can go right ahead.

1 LYNNE GOODWIN: I thought I had my hand up, but
2 maybe not. I'd like to make three additional comments if I
3 can, based on some comments Donnalee made.

4 It sounds like Southern New Hampshire Services has
5 done an outstanding job contacting landlords and asking them
6 to be patient.

7 I'm not sure that is happening in the Tri-County
8 area, because as of last week, I was contacted by two
9 landlords who did not have any verification that tenants had
10 started the process, as of early July. So maybe that's room
11 for improvement with some of the CAP agencies.

12 Her comment about having to have proper
13 documentation in order to approve and expend the CARES Act
14 funds: I am the city Welfare Director. I know all about
15 proper documentation in order to spend taxpayer dollars, and
16 totally appreciate having to have everything in order in
17 order to approve funds.

18 And lastly, a comment about using the CARES Act
19 money first. The service providers in the Upper Valley area
20 are well versed in knowing that CARES Act money is available
21 for folks who owe back rent from April 1 on that is COVID-
22 related. So a loss of income or an increase in expenses

1 that was COVID-related.

2 And once they've applied for the CARES Act funds
3 and have a decision about approval or denial of those funds,
4 they will then be able to apply for additional rental
5 assistance from the cities and towns in the Upper Valley,
6 and from non-profit organizations such as Listen.

7 So the city and Listen are in a holding pattern
8 waiting for these tenants to have answers, so that we can
9 then assist them with what else might be remaining for their
10 back rent. I just wanted that to be known for everybody on
11 this call.

12 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. The last item on our
13 agenda is to set the next meeting date.

14 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Jerry, before we close, we
15 did have a presentation by Steve Ahnen about the hospitals,
16 and he couldn't be on this call today, but I think all of us
17 have received a letter from Catholic Medical Center about an
18 additional request that they have -- with regard to funding.

19 And I don't know if we can discuss that today as
20 the last item on the agenda, or we make it a key item for
21 our next meeting. Those -- the two hospitals in Manchester
22 are in serious trouble -- serious trouble. And they're

1 bleeding -- they're hemorrhaging. And as a result, they
2 need money.

3 And I received an additional letter from Dr. Peppy
4 (phonetic) today, and I think other members of the GOFERR
5 Committee have received an ask from him, and they're in
6 definite need. And we -- I think we have to deal with that
7 expeditiously.

8 And as I said, Ahnen isn't around today, but he
9 did present a number of factors to us. He said a number of
10 spreadsheets, and I'd like to talk about that today. That's
11 how important I think it is to the city -- certainly the
12 City of Manchester and the Southern New Hampshire area.

13 But to see him see itself (sic), and I don't know
14 what your conclusion is, whether we can do that today or
15 whether it has to be the first item of business in our next
16 GOFERR meeting, but that's a critical, critical issue. And
17 it's exacerbating on a daily basis. So I want to make that
18 plea.

19 JERRY LITTLE: We don't have anybody. Steve is --
20 he has a personal matter that he's doing today, and notified
21 us that he was not going to be able to join us. I don't
22 believe we have anybody from that specific hos. And so, I'm

1 not sure that -- I know that I'm not capable to answer
2 questions on behalf of either the Hospital Association or
3 Catholic Medical Center.

4 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Then I think I --

5 JERRY LITTLE: I would suggest that we make it --

6 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: At our next meeting, Jerry?

7 JERRY LITTLE: Yes.

8 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: And Steve Ahnen did forward
9 some material to us.

10 JERRY LITTLE: Yes.

11 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: It's in sheet format, so I
12 think people can look at that. But I think it's got to be a
13 number one item at our next meeting.

14 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. So specifically CMC?

15 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: CMC is the one that's
16 contacted me. I think CMC has written letters to every
17 member of the Commission. I think Elliott's in the same
18 situation. I have communications from Elliott that I have
19 from Catholic Medical Center. I received another one today
20 before this meeting from Catholic Medical Center.

21 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. We will get back in
22 touch with Mr. Ahnen again --

1 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Great.

2 JERRY LITTLE: -- and organize that through for
3 the first item on the next meeting's agenda.

4 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Does anybody have any thoughts
6 about the next meeting, when it should be?

7 BOARD MEMBER: How about September 23?

8 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I think that's too far out.
9 We've got to meet before September 23. I mean, these items
10 are pressing.

11 BOARD MEMBER: I said September 23, Lou, because
12 September 16 is Veto Day. September 23 would be a month
13 out.

14 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: I'd ask if we could meet
15 before that. I understand that Veto Day, but I'd like -- I
16 think this is pressing enough that we ought to meet before
17 that. This -- they're hemorrhaging.

18 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Jerry, you said you were looking
19 at the accounts. When are you -- when do you feel you're
20 going to be on that process?

21 JERRY LITTLE: I don't believe we're going to be
22 ready for that until the end of September, Senator.

1 STEVE SHURTLEFF: So the twenty-third makes sense
2 then.

3 JERRY LITTLE: So I think -- so most of the folks
4 that have received grants in all of the 40 something plus
5 nearly 50 funds that we have created through GOFERR are of
6 the opinion that they've got until December 30 to spend
7 those funds. I think they're going to be a bit surprised
8 when we start -- if we start contacting them next week
9 asking how much of it are they ready to give back to us.

10 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Okay.

11 JERRY LITTLE: Many of them just got their
12 funding, and are really just moving on starting to expend
13 it. So I'm not sure that there will be an awful lot of
14 veracity to the data that they're able to give to us, if we
15 start asking them too soon how much of it are they going to
16 give back?

17 So we can try to have a better understanding of
18 any lapses within the funds, shoot for the end of September,
19 but I think even that's going to be a bit early, since many
20 of the funds are just getting rolling now.

21 STEVE SHURTLEFF: So Jerry, is it your preference
22 to do the thirtieth instead of the twenty-third?

1 JERRY LITTLE: That probably works well. It would
2 give us a better idea of what we're going to have for lapse
3 funds.

4 MARY JANE WALLNER: Mr. Little, I had my hand up -
5 - Maryjane.

6 JERRY LITTLE: Oh, I'm sorry, Representative
7 Wallner. We don't see it on our -- we don't see your hand
8 up on our screen. Oh, I'm --

9 DONNA SOUCY: I've had mine raised as well. This
10 is Donna Soucy. I'll go after Maryjane.

11 MARY JANE WALLNER: Okay.

12 JERRY LITTLE: Oh, I'm sorry. We're not showing
13 any hands at all on our screen at this point. We must have
14 --

15 ERIN HENNESSEY: This is Erin. I'll add my name
16 to the list. I've had my hand up as well.

17 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yeah, Steve also.

18 JERRY LITTLE: I'm very sorry.

19 MARY JANE WALLNER: I would like to see us start
20 meeting more regularly. I mean, maybe every other week, I
21 realize you may not have your information ready for us until
22 the end of September.

1 But it seems like -- and today is already almost a
2 four hour meeting and I think that we could really -- I
3 think that now that we're getting, you know, into the fall,
4 we're getting to the point where we're really starting to
5 draw down the funds, I think we need to really start to stay
6 on top of it and it needs to be more frequent than every
7 month.

8 So I would suggest that maybe we schedule a
9 meeting in a couple of weeks, and then again at the end of
10 the month, so that we -- so that we can sort of stay on top
11 of what's going on. [A suggestion. I'll look for dates.]

12 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. If I could, I would
13 throw one other issue out there with the meeting on
14 Wednesdays, which are Governor and Council days generally as
15 well -- I think they may have a Friday GMC meeting coming up
16 soon -- but we have items -- GOFERR may have items pending
17 on Governor Council, and so we may have to ask you if we're
18 going to meet on a frequent basis to choose a day other than
19 What do you.

20 ERIN HENNESSEY: How about Thursday September 17?

21 MARY JANE WALLNER: I was suggesting that we meet

22 --

1 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: What's wrong with meeting
2 on Monday?

3 JERRY LITTLE: So I'm trying to figure out who we
4 have for hands raised. Representative Hennessey, I believe
5 you were waiting to speak?

6 ERIN HENNESSEY: I'll wait to speak. I had some
7 questions, but I'll wait to speak until after you set the
8 next date, thank you.

9 JERRY LITTLE: Senator Soucy?

10 SENATOR SOUCY: Yeah, I was going to suggest
11 Thursday, September 17. That's about three weeks out. And
12 then I also had one other item to raise, and that was
13 Senator D'Allesandro earlier, during the education
14 presentations had mentioned the technology funds, and using
15 some of those dollars.

16 And I thought there was a motion out there, and
17 then I thought we were going to get back to it and we did
18 not, so I wanted to just raise that for Senator D'Allesandro
19 and ask him what his intention was.

20 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Thank you. My intention
21 was to make a motion to set that money aside and to use it
22 for a fund for the schools, acknowledging a technology fund.

1 They're not going to spend that money for sure, and there's
2 approximately \$36 million hanging out there that I think
3 could be made available to schools. And that's sort of a
4 technology fund that the public schools could access.

5 So yes --

6 SENATOR SOUCY: I don't think that's --

7 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: -- I wanted something like
8 that there. So -- and we did have -- we had some discussion
9 about that, but you're right, that sort of slipped by the
10 cracks, or through the crack.

11 JERRY LITTLE: So if we're meeting in possibly two
12 weeks, a little bit more than two weeks, is that an issue
13 you'd like to add to that agenda, or do we want to dive into
14 this subject now?

15 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Well, I think if you're
16 basing everything upon inadequacy in terms of dollars that
17 are left, we can wait until the seventeenth, because then
18 you'll have an accurate figure. Because right now the \$36
19 million is out, and I can't say that's the exact number.

20 But if by the seventeenth we could have the exact
21 -- we could bring it forward on the seventeenth, it would be
22 a good time to have more discussion, knowing full well what

1 the dollar amount is.

2 SENATOR MORSE: Is that the call for \$50 million,
3 on the spreadsheet we got from the Commissioner you're
4 talking about.

5 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Yeah, Chuck, it's out of
6 that.

7 SENATOR MORSE: Okay. Are you all set? Because
8 I've had my hand up for a good half an hour, and I guess I
9 did it wrong. But the -- two things. 1) When I got home
10 last night and I was going through the agenda, I did call
11 Jerry and I did call Donnalee this morning.

12 Because that was just one of many things that I
13 questioned that we were maybe stepping outside of what our
14 bounds are on this committee. However, I do think the two
15 presenters brought a lot of awareness to the subject.

16 So I don't think we did any harm today, but here's
17 my thinking: If we're going to build agendas in the future,
18 it was mentioned earlier that, you know, Lou you brought up
19 \$500,000.

20 I'm not picking on you, but we didn't have any
21 details and we just -- you know, we just were going to do
22 something on fellowship, seriously. And you almost had me

1 there. But I don't think that's how we should be doing
2 things.

3 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: But I --

4 SENATOR MORSE: September 17 I have a meeting. I
5 think if there's going to be a motion to transfer money out
6 of that \$50 million, I think we should have the speakers
7 that need to be here be here, and have that motion before
8 them before it comes here, so that we can understand what
9 we're doing.

10 But I -- as we get down, I know it's getting
11 tricky, and people -- I mean, I'm hearing from people too
12 that need money. I mean, I've said this before: The ball
13 team isn't the only outside group in the community right now
14 falling.

15 I mean, I know Manchester has that problem, but
16 all of our towns are having issues with -- you know, I can
17 tell you I don't even represent -- you know, Camp Pride up
18 with the Lions, and all they want is, like, five grand to
19 cover some operating expenses.

20 And I'm like, "I'm not sure we have a bucket, you
21 know, that covers that." I mean, but my whole point is if
22 we're going to build agendas, we should build agendas based

1 on factual stuff that we have the authority to deal with.

2 And I don't want to meet every two weeks to talk
3 about things that I think the legislature should be back
4 talking about, because I don't want to get into that today,
5 but I certainly felt that way Monday, and I do not -- I
6 think the legislature has obligations too, and GOFERR --
7 Jerry did a good job of stating what we're responsible for,
8 and I think that's what our agendas should look like. And
9 just my two cents. So we've got seven other opinions.

10 But we've been on this phone call now for four
11 hours and, I mean, while I've learned a lot, I don't think I
12 accomplished anything. That's just not a good feeling.

13 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: That's true. That's true.
14 I agree with that, and I think you're absolutely right. If
15 you build an agenda item, people should be prepared to talk
16 about the agenda item, and you should have the people who
17 are involved to be able to defend their position.

18 And we're getting down -- we're getting close to
19 the end now, and we're seeing a lot of these things come up
20 that we didn't deal with.

21 And the key element is the thirtieth of December
22 will be here before we know it. The dollars are available,

1 should be spent fully. We need [04:01:17 audio unclear]
2 itself and I think we have to address those. So I thank
3 you.

4 SENATOR MORSE: I didn't e bring it up, but I mean
5 I certainly saw that on Unemployment, the state of New
6 Hampshire is now going to kick in \$100 per person per week.
7 I haven't seen any calculations on it. I certainly thought
8 about it putting it in this agenda, but I wouldn't bring it
9 unless I knew I talked to unemployment and understood where
10 we're going with all of this. Because, remember, we
11 sidestepped that number from the beginning.

12 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: Right.

13 SENATOR MORSE: And there is factual stuff that
14 needs to come forward, but we ought to be treating the
15 agenda with that kind of respect. I'm tired.

16 SENATOR D'ALLESANDRO: You're right. We're
17 getting down to the nitty gritty. And it just seems that we
18 need the facts in order to make the decisions. I concur
19 with that. You're absolutely correct. And you want to
20 leave a meeting like this feeling that you've accomplished
21 something. That's for the benefit of the people that we
22 represent.

1 JERRY LITTLE: So I have hands raised from
2 Representative Hennessey, Representative Hinch, and Speaker
3 Shurtleff at this point in time. Representative Hennessey,
4 would you like to --

5 ERIN HENNESSEY: Yes, thank you.

6 JERRY LITTLE: -- go next.

7 ERIN HENNESSEY: I have two things. One is it
8 deals with the Main Street grants. And someone asked me
9 recently what the process is going to be for the DRA to take
10 a look back at it, because it was part of their agreement
11 that at some point the DRA is going to look at it and
12 possibly take back some of the funds if they weren't
13 deserved.

14 And my second question is, is that going to
15 happen? And if so, if the DRA does take back these funds --
16 and this might be a question for Nancy -- can the state
17 actually spend them, since it would probably happen in 2021,
18 or do we have to return them to the federal government? So
19 two parts.

20 JERRY LITTLE: So the first part on whether or not
21 we're going to be taking a look at the appropriateness of
22 both the applications and the grant awards that were

1 received, the answer is yes, we have actually added recently
2 an Audit Division in GOFERR, so that we can look at
3 applications.

4 As you know, the Governor has made it very clear
5 from day one that we are to operate the GOFERR in a manner
6 that avoids waste, fraud and abuse of the federal funds. We
7 have had a number of phone calls with Treasury's Inspector
8 General discussing the ways that we have been putting the
9 money out there.

10 We've had conversations today about the
11 applications and the amount of data that we've been
12 collecting. The reason we're doing that is because Treasury
13 has made it clear to us that while New Hampshire has been
14 very aggressive to get this money into the hands of
15 organizations and businesses across the state, they're going
16 to be keeping an eye on us.

17 And so, we have added an Audit Office within
18 GOFERR, and yes, they'll be looking at applications. I
19 don't know the process the DRA might use and when they might
20 use it, if they need to, to claw any money back. But I
21 think the people should expect that that is the process that
22 will probably run.

1 As far as how the monies can be used, if we claw
2 any back, Nancy is still here, and if I start to speak out
3 of turn, I hope shell raise her hand and jump right in. But
4 I believe that any money that is clogged back still has the
5 same limitations that all of the CARES Act Funds have, that
6 we have to use them for coronavirus related expenses that --
7 or problems that occurred after March 1, and before December
8 30.

9 And I think that answers the questions.

10 ERIN HENNESSEY: So just to follow up on that, so
11 even if they -- it's clawed back in '21, we could still use
12 it for events that occurred in 2020?

13 JERRY LITTLE: No, I'm sorry. If we claw it back
14 in '21, it goes back to the federal government.

15 ERIN HENNESSEY: Okay. And then my second
16 question is adding an agenda item. And I don't want to talk
17 much about it now, because I know everyone is tired of being
18 on this call, probably, but the -- some of the funding --
19 specifically the GAP Funding that just happened, I think
20 that was a great opportunity for those who didn't qualify,
21 for other ones to apply for those.

22 But unfortunately, some of the other programs

1 received their denial letters after the GAP application
2 period ended. So I would like to discuss the opportunity to
3 request another GAP Funding option. If we could add that to
4 the agenda, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

5 JERRY LITTLE: Thank you. Give me just a second
6 to scribble that down. Very good. Representative Hinch?

7 DICK HINCH: Yes, thank you. So I just want to --
8 in an effort to move this along, have we decided upon and
9 agreed to the seventeenth of September for our next meeting?

10 JERRY LITTLE: That I think is the recommendation.
11 Thursday the seventeenth.

12 DICK HINCH: Okay.

13 JERRY LITTLE: Does anybody have a problem with
14 that date? Hearing none, we'll set the next meeting date
15 for Thursday, September 17 at 1:00 p.m. At this point, the
16 items I have for that agenda are CMC funding, Broadband
17 Excess Funds to Intec, Speaker Shurtleff asked in an e-mail
18 for an update on Mascoma Community Health, and
19 Representative Hennessey just asked us to discuss
20 opportunities to reopen the GAP Fund for people the school
21 denied their initial application, received that notice too
22 late to apply for GAP.

1 ERIN HENNESSEY: And the tabled motion from today,
2 did you have that?

3 JERRY LITTLE: And so that tabled motion had to do
4 with snow machines, is that correct, Representative
5 Hennessey?

6 ERIN HENNESSEY: Yes.

7 JERRY LITTLE: Very good. Anything else for the
8 agenda for the seventeenth?

9 [Side administrative conversation]

10 JERRY LITTLE: Okay. Hearing nothing, not seeing
11 any other hands, I believe, Mr. Speaker, you also were on
12 the list?

13 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Yeah, I'm all set, Jerry, thank
14 you.

15 JERRY LITTLE: Okay. Anything from anybody else
16 for today's meeting? Hearing none, we will adjourn this
17 meeting of the Legislative Advisory Board at 5:11 p.m. Thank
18 you all very, very much. I think we set a record this
19 afternoon.

20 STEVE SHURTLEFF: Thank you, Commissioner.

21 COLLECTIVE: Thank you, goodbye.

22 [End of Proceedings]