



State of New Hampshire  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Majority Office

March 30, 2023

House Democratic Leader Matt Wilhelm  
State House Room 307  
Concord, NH 03301

Leader Wilhelm,

I have made a genuine effort this term to be on record as often as possible emphasizing the importance of bipartisanship and working for the common good of New Hampshire. The election results in November were very clear: Granite Staters did not elect a decisive majority in the House, and they wanted the two parties to work together and find practical solutions to everyday problems.

It was in that spirit of compromise that the Speaker brought our two leadership teams together this week to work through our differences on the state budget in order to come up with something that everyone could support.

From my viewpoint, the Finance committee produced a truly bipartisan work product that incorporated several key policies both parties could support. It also included several Republican concessions in key policy areas including spending and taxes.

Yesterday, Republicans offered you several additional concessions, based on areas of concern that you supplied us, working toward even more bipartisan compromise. I gave up significant Republican priorities to meet you and your caucus on your demands.

I am disheartened to hear that not only did you not accept any of our concessions, but your leadership members have gone on to make statements in public and amongst your caucus alleging that we did not come close.

I am happy to review our proposal with you again and ask where we fell short on meeting you.

- You proposed restoring housing support funding cut from the governor's budget: \$15 million to InvestNH and \$10 million to the Affordable Housing Fund. **We met you on that request by reallocating \$10 million from InvestNH towards Affordable Housing for \$25 million total towards Affordable Housing.**
- You proposed establishing guardrails on Education Freedom Accounts, retaining the 300% income eligibility cap, adding in the language of HB430, HB626, and capping the annual budget at \$20 million. **We offered to lower EFA spending by \$20 million, remove all House passed EFA bills from HB2, including raising the income cap,**

**and agreed to additional oversight of the EFA program by the department.**

- You proposed including an amendment by Rep. Rick Ladd and Rep. David Luneau to increase public education funding to property-poor communities. **We met you on that request.**
- You proposed increasing Medicaid provider rates \$40 million above the Finance committee proposal. **We met you on that request.**
- You proposed removing language on Medicaid Expansion. **We proposed negotiating the sunset date to longer than 2 years, which you refused to do.**

I understand that we could not come to a consensus on items such as eliminating the accelerated phase-out of the Interest and Dividends tax, or restoring \$75 million in school building aid, however in the case of school building aid, we had no money left to spend after conceding to your other spending requests.

In order to fund Democratic priorities, we spent the little money that was allocated to the Rainy Day Fund. Keeping our Rainy Day Fund at a healthy level is a significant priority for Republicans, but again, in the spirit of compromise, we were willing to suck it up and spend it.

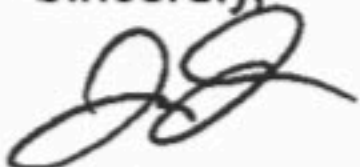
The Democratic priorities listed above were not our first attempt at reaching a bipartisan agreement. In HB2, we had already sacrificed the repeal of the Communications Service Tax in order to fund changes to group II retirement from HB436. This was an unpopular bill with the Republican caucus, but we were willing to meet you on that priority, as well.

As evidenced above, it appears as if you never had any intention to work towards compromise and would rather play political games with the future of our state and its people. Manufacturing outrage to produce headlines and fundraising letters is no way to govern.

Granite Staters sent us here to do a job. If you are not willing to do that job, then it is only the people of this state who will suffer.

Rather than demonstrate leadership and continue to work in good faith, you have chosen to walk away. After the votes on the 6th, I look forward to knowing who on the Democratic side of the aisle we will be able to work with going forward.

Sincerely,



Jason Osborne  
House Majority Leader  
NH House of Representatives