

GOVERNOR'S MILLENNIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

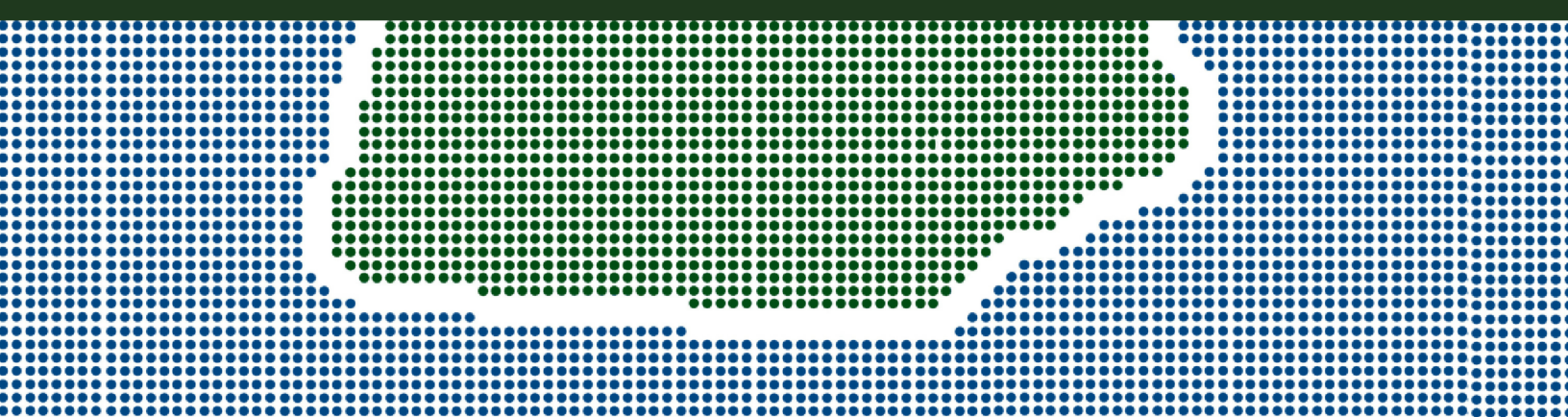




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Letter to the Governor

December 20, 2017

His Excellency Christopher T. Sununu
Governor of the State of New Hampshire
State House
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu:

Pursuant to Executive Order 2017-07, please accept the enclosed annual report of the Governor's Millennial Advisory Council. The report includes an overview of the Council's activity since its inception on September 20th, the establishing Executive Order, and issue specific recommendations concerning:

- Housing
- Education
- Conservation, the Environment, Transportation
- Workforce Development

The report also includes a brief look ahead on the next year and vision for the Council's future.

Sincerely,

Alexander J. Fries
Chair
Governor's Millennial Advisory Council



Overview

The Governor's Millennial Advisory Council was created by Governor Sununu's Executive Order 2017-07. The Council is charged with providing the Governor with recommendations, insight, suggestions, and feedback on matters of State policy that directly impact the attraction and retention of young workers. The Council consists of 25 members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor: two members from each county in New Hampshire, two members from the City of Manchester and the City of Nashua respectively, and a twenty-fifth member who serves as Chair. Members of the Council must be born between the years 1980 and 2000.

Since its inaugural meeting in September, the Council has met four times. The first meeting of the Council was primarily focused on identifying the diverse background and experiences of the Council and organizing the Council into subcommittees to more effectively explore policy areas. Subsequent meetings of the Council allowed the four subcommittees of Housing, Workforce Development, Environment, and Education to compile issues of relevance and to discuss other matters relevant to young people in the Granite State.

The recommendations outlined in this report reflect the opinions and experiences of the Council members as Millennials living and working in the State of New Hampshire.



Executive Order



CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BY HIS EXCELLENCY
CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR**

Executive Order 2017-07

An order establishing the Governor's Millennial Advisory Council

WHEREAS, the State of New Hampshire strives to be the best state in the nation for individuals of all ages to work, start a business, and raise a family; and

WHEREAS, attracting and retaining young New Hampshire workers is a critical component of New Hampshire's economic and social future; and

WHEREAS, young New Hampshire workers face a variety of challenges, including but not limited to affordable housing, student loan debt, and healthcare; and

WHEREAS, young New Hampshire workers continue to be underrepresented in the State Legislature and in local governing bodies; and

WHEREAS, the development of public policy aimed at attracting and retaining young workers requires input from young workers around the State and across various industries;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, by the authority vested in me pursuant to part II, article 41 of the New Hampshire Constitution, do hereby order, effective immediately, that:

1. There is established the Governor's Millennial Advisory Council. The Council shall provide recommendations, insight, suggestions, and feedback to the Governor on matters of New Hampshire state policy that directly impact the attraction and retention of young workers.
2. The Council shall meet at least monthly. Detailed minutes of each meeting, containing a description of topics discussed and any resulting recommendations of the Council, shall be submitted to the Governor for review within seven days of each meeting.
3. The Council shall consist of the following members, all of whom shall be individuals born between the years 1980 and 2000:

107 North Main Street, State House - Rm 208, Concord, New Hampshire 03301
Telephone (603) 271-2121 • FAX (603) 271-7640
Website: <http://www.governor.nh.gov/> • Email: governorsununu@nh.gov
TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964



Executive Order

- a) two residents of each County in the State, appointed by the Governor; and
- b) two residents of the City of Manchester, appointed by the Governor;
- c) two residents of the City of Nashua, appointed by the Governor; and
- d) one additional member who shall serve as Chair of the Council, appointed by the Governor.

4. In addition to individual meeting summaries, the Council shall submit to the Governor an annual report, on or before December 1st of the year 2017 and September 1st of each year thereafter, which consists of:

- a) a summary of the Council's activities during the year;
- b) a list of all recommendations submitted to the Governor during the year; and
- c) a summary of any research or other information the Council has compiled which the Council feels would be valuable to the Governor in the consideration or development of future policy proposals.

5. The Council may, as it deems appropriate, organize segments of its membership into committees for the purpose of examining specific policy issues.

6. A majority of appointed Council members shall constitute a quorum, and all official actions of the Council shall require a majority vote of those members present and voting.

Given under my hand and seal at the Executive Chambers in Concord, this 20th day of September, in the year of Our Lord, two thousand and seventeen, and the independence of the United States of America, two hundred and forty-one.

GOVERNOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



Membership

Kwame Ohene-Adu — Grafton

Austen Bernier — Carroll

Josh Bushueff — Sullivan

José Calvo — Hillsborough

Amanda Dubs — Coos

Alexander J. Fries — Chair,
Governor Appointee

Erin Gleeson — Nashua

Daniel Gray — Merrimack

George Hansel — Cheshire

Ethan Kuhn — Grafton

Katelyn Kwoka — Rockingham

Danya Landis — Cheshire

Kara LaSalle — Belknap

Carolyn Leary — Manchester

Cory LeClair — Sullivan

Adam Lord — Manchester

Katie MacKinnon — Strafford

Bryanna Marceau — Merrimack

Shawn Olsten — Strafford

Pamela Provencher — Hillsborough

Erin Shedd — Coos

Jaimie Sousa — Belknap

Matt Sullivan — Rockingham

Mike Turcotte — Nashua

Jessica Wright — Carroll



Housing

Summary: Housing is the backbone of a community and the keystone of community development. Due to the impact on the people who live there, housing is important to communities as a whole. Housing has long been proven to stabilize families, has a direct link to individual health, and impacts economic growth and workforce development. The current housing market in New Hampshire has a low inventory; specifically in the number of entry-level homes for sale. The limited inventory, high infrastructure development costs, and a development market aimed at high-end housing, results in higher sale prices for homes. Rental vacancy rates remain low in the state, while rental prices continue to increase due to high demand. Middle-income individuals and families have limited choices for housing, due in part to the lack of incentives. High quality of life, like that of New Hampshire, is increasingly important to economic development, with millennials increasingly selecting a place to live before choosing employment. This shift presents a great opportunity and creates a demand for housing as the State seeks to attract and retain millennials. For young people, housing availability is often the initial barrier of entry to live, work, and thrive in New Hampshire.

Focus Areas

Community and Economic Development: Housing and the built environment* shape communities and set the path for what they will become. The type of housing the State allows affects who can live and work in our State. If we want to see the Granite State continue to grow and maintain a vibrant and diverse population for years to come, proactively developing our communities is vital.

Attracting and retaining businesses relies on a young professional workforce. Businesses need a variety of housing options to accommodate their employee's needs. Currently, businesses in New Hampshire are facing workforce development challenges that are intertwined with the lack of affordable, quality housing for young professionals.

The current tax structure poses a challenge. Since there is an emphasis on property tax and no income tax, wealthier people are seeking out New Hampshire from other parts of New England to relocate or retire to, driving overall housing rates up. This, in turn, makes it difficult for young people just starting out in their careers to afford housing and the cost of property taxes in New Hampshire.

Policy Opportunities:

1. New Hampshire communities and existing and prospective Granite Staters continue to grapple with housing affordability. This struggle is seen in both rental and ownership housing opportunities. These affordability challenges result in further exclusivity of New Hampshire's housing market, and strain retention and attraction efforts focused on young people.
2. Housing preferences among younger adults suggest that more densely developed areas with community amenities and job opportunities are preferred. Future planning decisions need to be made with the needs of millennials in mind; otherwise rural communities will be left shouldering the tax burden on a shrinking elderly population.
3. The quality of both rental and owner-occupied housing is an issue across many New Hampshire communities. In more rural and lower-density areas, where housing stock is often more affordable, quality is particularly critical. Millennials are increasingly more willing to sacrifice on size, while maintaining location, safety and building quality.

* Built environment: Man-made structures, features, and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live and work.



Housing

4. One-time direct economic impacts include:
 - a) revenue from acquisition and predevelopment (design, permitting, fees)
 - b) off-site improvements (permanent infrastructure such as water, sewer, and roads)
 - c) revenue generated from construction (cost of materials, job creation, and wages paid)
5. Long-term direct economic impacts include:
 - a) creation of jobs
 - b) wages paid
 - c) revenue from property taxes
 - d) increased school populations (many rural schools oversized for current populations)
6. Indirect economic impacts include:
 - a) increased property value
 - b) approximately 60% of residents' income spent locally on goods and services

Laws and Regulations: Current, state housing statutes require a substantive update to reflect new housing needs around the State. As the needs of Granite Staters change, our statutes need to as well. The State should look at reforming its statutes to make New Hampshire more affordable and competitive in the housing market:

1. The State's Workforce Housing statute (RSA 674:58), first developed in 2008, should be analyzed for both effectiveness and currency. The statute's rigidity and basis in federal housing income limits arguably create a statute that, at its core, lacks 'New Hampshire values.'
2. The Accessory Dwelling Unit statute (RSA 674:21) represents a strong example of State-enabled zoning intended to incentivize a specific type of housing development. Housing advocates and professionals should explore additional State-enabling zoning actions, such as allowing for municipalities to create more aggressive local bonuses for affordable housing in order to directly address the affordable housing issue. Further, statutory changes could allow municipalities to create local affordable housing trust funds and require contributions by developers thereto during project development.
3. A review of enabling statutes (RSA 674) for local land use boards should be conducted to ensure that purpose statements for these boards align with and facilitate the development of housing in local communities and comprehensive housing planning.

Financing: Millennials and all people want to be able to invest in the place they call home. New Hampshire needs to enable young people to buy homes and builders to create affordable housing units. The majority of the State funding programs favor lower income units, creating an opportunity gap with regard to housing. Incentivizing this important segment would start to reduce the opportunity gap between middle and low-income housing.

Policy Recommendations:

1. The Housing Trust Fund currently allocates \$2.5 million dollars annually. This fund is highly competitive, and an increased cost of construction renders it an essentially non-viable source of funding for most development projects. States such as Massachusetts fund their Housing Trust Fund using a small percentage of for-profit developer fees. This takes the primary fiscal burden off of the State, generating and accumulating a greater pool of funds, ultimately helping promote the development of new housing.



Housing

2. The proposed decrease in the corporate tax rate would lower the investment value of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, thus decreasing the overall limited monetary sources for development of affordable housing. This gap could result in an even greater disparity between moderate and lower income housing.
3. Increasing incentives for first time home buyers makes New Hampshire more competitive in attracting millennials. This could include a reduction in the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT), lowering the initial costs of home ownership and incentivizing homeownership

Resources: Many cities and towns across New Hampshire are struggling with comparable housing issues and demographic concerns. Multiple organizations exist across the State to help with segments of housing, but many lack funding and capacity to keep resources current to the State's housing trends and issues. Combining the State's resources under a centralized agency or division would provide municipalities with the guidance to navigate their local housing needs.

Policy Recommendations:

1. New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) is an instrument of the State of New Hampshire but receives no State funding. The Authority is a critical voice and presence for affordable housing in the State of New Hampshire, but is limited in its capacity due to funding. The subcommittee recommends reviewing the services currently provided by the Authority and the potential for the expansion of the agency.
2. The newly formed Office of Strategic Initiatives should consider the development of a revised housing affordability toolkit to include accessory dwelling unit guidance as well as any potential affordability statute changes identified as an opportunity earlier in this document under "Laws and Regulations."
3. NHHFA's Biennial Housing Plan is a fantastic resource for communities. However, statewide focus and geographic granularity make its usefulness for New Hampshire municipalities limited. The Housing Authority or Office of Strategic Initiatives should explore the preparation of a statewide 2-year Housing Needs Assessment that applies statewide housing trends, combined with local housing data, to make specific and nuanced recommendations for communities. This should guide Regional Planning Commissions in the development of their Regional Housing Needs Assessments.

Public Awareness/Outreach and Education: Public educational outreach on the issue of housing is important so residents can meaningfully impact the new projects in their area and support building the housing they want to see. The state's strong 'Live Free or Die' ideals combined with a lack of clear strategic messaging surrounding affordable and workforce housing, has created a misconception and stigma around the issue. While progress has been made in this area, significant work remains to be done to ensure broad-based support for this essential housing opportunity.



Housing

Policy Recommendations:

1. New Hampshire's Housing Coalitions are currently declining in count, activity, and reach. The Housing Coalitions are a critical liaison between New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and local communities across the State of New Hampshire. However, as the funding and capacity of the Coalitions decreases, the relationship between municipalities and statewide policy discussion and changes is weakened. Housing challenges are being presented to municipalities and more resources are needed to educate the public on the process and where they can have productive input.
2. Currently, several groups are working on critical housing issues across the State of New Hampshire: Housing Action NH, PLAN New Hampshire, BIA, NHHFA, Housing Coalitions, Chambers of Commercial, Elected and Appointed Officials, and numerous levels of public officials. Many of these groups operate independently of each other. We recommend a housing task force be established to implement and further explore the recommendations of this report and other studies. This task force would facilitate coordination and cooperation between these various groups while allowing for them to contribute their unique expertise and support resources on various issues.



Education

Summary: Our focus is to find a solution to help alleviate student debt for graduates who currently have debt as well as educating students at the high school level about student debt.

The burden of student debt is currently hindering recent graduates, in particular Millennials, and is significantly reducing the amount of disposable income that is available to them. This is impeding their ability to pay for mortgages, rent, vehicles or put money back into their local economies. High amounts of debt also present a significant barrier to entrepreneurship and starting a new business.

Focus Areas

Obligation to Educate: As Millennials, we see the burden student debt has created for our generation and want to tackle the problem at the root of the cause. We believe this starts with an obligation to educate students at the high school level about different paths for higher education and the effect that their choices will have on their future earning potential and debts owed.

We believe this issue can be addressed with two different components, a dedicated resource counselor and an interactive program that allows students to explore different higher education opportunities.

Policy Recommendations:

1. On the State level, a new job position should be created for a school resource counselor. This position would have a variety of responsibilities which would include but not be limited to traveling to every high school in the State to educate high school students about secondary education options and the effect that student loans can have on your future.
 - i. Secondary education options would include but not be limited to
 - ii. Vocational schools;
 - iii. STEM-related schools; and
 - iv. Traditional colleges that offer both associates and bachelor degrees.

It is important to inform students that there are more options than just a traditional four-year college and that a person can still achieve a rewarding career outside of this option. Occupations in the trade industries often do not require a four-year degree and therefore do not have the same large burden of debt.

The school resource counselor could also encourage high school students to enroll in a college course while in high school, if such an option is offered. This would allow a student to see whether he or she enjoys the environment and structure of a college and its classwork.



Education

2. For a more hands-on approach to learning about student debt, we envision a website or app being created that provides a student, parent, or guidance counselor a place to discover potential future student debt costs based on a specific career path. Below are steps we envision such an interactive program would include:

- a. If a student is seeking a secondary education, the app would identify the field of study or career the student was interested in.
- b. Then, the app would show the schools that offer the specific career path, regardless of the length of program.
- c. The student would then be able to compare and contrast multiple schools' cost of tuition, books and other living expenses for the amount of time that would be required to complete the chosen career or degree, with an option to have scholarships, grants or other monies that they might receive be reflected in the overall costs.
- d. In the next step, the amount of debt that the student would incur pursuing their chosen career path would be displayed, along with the amount of time it would take to pay off with regular monthly payments.
- e. We envision this to be done through an amortization schedule including both principal amount borrowed and amount of interest incurred over a certain period of time.
- f. In the following step, the student would then be able to contrast and compare the approximate monthly student debt payment to the average amount of income that a graduate would receive in their respective field in a single month.
- g. Other cost of living expenses, such as rent, groceries, and utilities, can also be incorporated into this calculation to show a student the real-world implications of accruing high student-debt.
- h. Our hope with this program is to make students more aware of the options that are available to them for secondary education and the impacts that their choices could have on their life financially in the future. We feel that this would be a tremendous program for current high school students that would not be a large financial burden on the state.

3. There is currently a non-profit, CU4Reality, located in Manchester, New Hampshire, that has designed various hands-on curriculums for elementary through high school-aged students that informs them about personal finances. More specifically, at the highschool level, a real-world experience is simulated where students need to manage their finances and make tough decisions based on the amount of money that is available to them and what their needs are, not necessarily what they want. Areas such as career development, budgeting, retirement planning, credit cards and loans are also covered in the curriculum. This program is similar to the goal that we are trying to achieve in that we need to further educate our youth before making decisions to enter into secondary education. Since this successful program is already in place, it may be possible to expand this program to include a more specific curriculum about student debt and its effects on financial decision making.

4. The State of New Hampshire should continue to explore breaking down the barriers to creating a 21st-century education system in New Hampshire that enables parents and students to choose what schools and programs work best for them. This will not only empower low and middle-income families and children with disabilities, but also allow for more opportunity with regards to education in the State of New Hampshire.



Environment

Summary: Environment, Conservation, and Transportation are issues of particular importance for the quality of life in New Hampshire and may be key factors in the retention and attraction of young people to the Granite State. While issues like transportation, sustainable technologies, outdoor recreation, and conservation all have strong implications for quality of life and economic development in New Hampshire, it is simultaneously impossible to ignore the common thread that they share in the larger questions that are important to Millennials such as climate change, corporate social responsibility, and social justice considerations. Therefore, the policy suggestions put forth by this committee in the coming months will be comprised of multifaceted considerations: those unique to the sub-issue, and the greater conceptual glue that holds them together in pursuing a future for New Hampshire that is environmentally clean, socially just, economically prudent, and climatically cognizant.

Focus Areas

Climate Policy: It is overwhelmingly clear through polls and studies that a progressive and proactive stance on Climate Change and Climate Policy is important to members of the Millennial Generation. Regardless of background, political affiliation, or other personally-held beliefs, a large majority of Millennials believe that climate change is happening and that the earth's warming is due to human activity.

Millennials are particularly in favor of sustainable energy generation. Approximately 71% of Millennials believe we should prioritize alternative energy generation over oil, gas, and coal exploration, and 82% favor increased funding for wind, solar, and hydrogen technologies. Millennials in great numbers believe in sound science and proactive, win-win policies that steward our environment as well as generate economic opportunity and jobs.

To ignore Climate Change in New Hampshire is to ignore the myriad of new jobs, technological innovations, and investments spurred by the global, economic and social shift toward renewable energy. It is to slight the outdoor tourism industry that is so central to New Hampshire's economy, as well as the many businesses – such as those in the ski and snowmobiling industry – that rely on a stable climate. It is to fundamentally question the importance of New Hampshire's identity and the centrality of snow and our cold New Hampshire winters. It is to patronize the plights of our compatriots in other areas of the country who must also surmount the acute and more often cataclysmic effects of climate change.

Millennials are aware of, and will continue to see, the increasing consequences of a warming climate. They understand that the exponential effect of climate change is positioned to become a monumental burden upon their children.

Policy Recommendations:

1. The State of New Hampshire should demonstrate its leadership and dedication to a healthy and viable climate by joining the United States Climate Alliance, and committing to meeting the emissions targets agreed upon in the Paris Climate Accord.

Transportation: Transportation, particularly sustainable transportation, is an issue that is of importance to Millennials. Studies show that Millennials are less interested in owning cars than older generations, and more interested in taking their bicycle or public transportation to their places of work (Washington Post).

Simultaneously, transportation is an issue that is inherently variegated across geographic locales. In Southern New Hampshire, for example, transportation looks very different from in the North Country, and hence the problems and solutions that arise from transportation in these locales will also be considerably different.



Environment

In southern New Hampshire there is considerable support for the development of commuter rails as commuter traffic in and around New Hampshire's urban centers continues to intensify. Millennials in New Hampshire support the development of new commuter rails and their connections to other urban centers in the state and the Northeast. The pursuit of these transportation goals has begun in southern New Hampshire, with Nashua's Aldermen unanimously approving a memorandum to bring commuter rail services to Nashua. This will create rail service connecting Bedford and Nashua to the Massachusetts towns of Lowell and Worcester. This plan is encouraging for Millennials who want to live in and enjoy the benefits that New Hampshire has to offer, while still having easy access to the cities of Massachusetts.

In northern New Hampshire, tourist traffic related to public land access and the White Mountain National Forest clogs local roadways. This significantly decreases the quality of life during peak tourism seasons as locals battle traffic and congested roadways to get to work. The inefficiencies and frustration this causes in the North Country cannot be overstated. In these areas, Millennials support the development of seasonal shuttle services between hospitality lodgings and popular trailheads. Seasonal shuttle services would ameliorate severe parking issues at popular access points to the National Forest and adjacent public lands.

In the North Country, Millennials support the development of alternative transportation options that could decrease the amount of traffic on the roads. Greenways and commuter trails/paths through town centers and expansion of bike lane infrastructure, could contribute significantly to the reduction in local traffic and improve the quality of life in these northern areas.

Policy Recommendations:

1. General support for the commuter rail line in Nashua. Support and incentivize for commuter paths in town centers.
2. Support bike lane infrastructure when roads are re-done in town centers.
3. Support and incentivize for shuttle service between popular recreation sites in areas surrounding the National Forest.
4. Support the development of ride-share Programs to connect different parts of the state with the least amount of additional vehicles and emissions

Business & Jobs: The number of jobs in the renewable energy sector – such as solar photovoltaic installer, wind turbine service technician, clean car engineer and more – is increasing at an incredible rate. According to a recent study by the US Dept. of Energy, 6.4 million Americans currently work in the energy sector, with 300,000 jobs added in 2016 alone. Solar photovoltaic installers and wind turbine technicians are the fastest growing occupations in the United States.

In the State of New Hampshire, the solar and biomass industries provide over 2,000 jobs and contribute hundreds of millions annually to New Hampshire's economy (New Hampshire Sustainable Energy Association). These are valuable jobs that are of high interest to Millennials.



Environment

The cleantech business sector – innovative technologies, services, and products that enhance environmental performance in the energy, construction, transportation, utility, and waste industries – is estimated to become a \$5 trillion business by the mid- 2020s. New Hampshire today has at least 13,000 workers employed due to cleantech, and the average annual wage in a cleantech-associated job is likely to be about 50% higher than the state average annual wage (NH Cleantech Market Report).

If we want to foster, higher paying jobs in the State that attract talented young professionals, then we must foster these innovative industries and the cleantech sector. We cannot afford to cut, undo, or destabilize any programs or policies that incentivize investments and development in clean energy. These programs and policies lead to jobs that apply STEM skills that we so highly value and promote. If we cannot support these industries and jobs, we can expect skilled millennials to find them in other states.

Supporting energy policies that encourage New Hampshire businesses to bolster their social responsibility with regard to clean, sustainable energy, and subsequently encouraging businesses to take on a characteristic that is attractive to the Millennials. A Nielson report from 2015 showed that 73% of Millennial consumers are willing to spend more on a product if it comes from a sustainable brand.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Maintain New Hampshire's existing renewable energy policies in regard to Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard.
2. Strive to create stable incentive and rebate programs that encourage New Hampshire residents and businesses to invest in sustainable energy and cleantech.
3. Explore the research being done by the New Hampshire Clean Tech Council.
4. Provide recognition for businesses that adopt individual climate policies, reduce emissions, and implement sustainable energy solutions.

Outdoor Recreation, Conservation and Public Lands: Millennials now represent the largest block of the workforce statewide and nationally and the correlation with increasing usage of public lands is hard to ignore. In New Hampshire, the outdoor recreation industry generates \$8.7 billion in consumer spending, sustains 79,000 jobs, and generates \$528 million in state and local tax revenue (Outdoor Industry Association)

It is important that we implement policies encouraging this sector to grow and prosper here in NH. A study conducted by Harris (HRS) states that 78% of Millennials would prefer to spend money on an experience or event over a desirable item. New Hampshire could benefit from focusing on the maintenance, improvement, and conservation of its natural resource.

New Hampshire's natural resources and scenic landscapes are the bedrock of the vibrant tourism economy in the Granite State. However, in the face of increasing usage numbers on the White Mountain National Forest and surrounding state parks, trail maintainers are having an increasingly difficult time keeping up with trail maintenance. Trails are the foundation of outdoor recreation in New Hampshire; their health and maintenance are of paramount concern for recreation and the recreation economy. More than half of the trail maintenance on and around the National Forest is performed by entities other than the US Forest Service. These entities, despite dating back to the 1800s, are dealing with a lack of funding and membership attrition.



Environment

In order to keep pace with the demand for trail maintenance in the common era, it is necessary that more funding opportunities be created for these groups to continue to steward our natural places that are such a draw for visitors from around the world, and that are a significant factor in the quality of life of residents in the area. Granite Staters often feel tied to the land in very significant ways and this is particularly true of Millennials. Protecting and preserving our landscape is a crucial element in attracting and retaining a vibrant young population in the state.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Increased funding opportunities for trail maintainers.
2. Continued and increased support of state programs such as Land and Community Heritage Incentive Program (LCHIP).
3. Continued and increased support of local and regional conservation organizations.

Agriculture: National trends with regards to aging in farming can also be perceived in New Hampshire and it means that as farmers age out of the industry, the disconnect between non-farmers and the food that they eat grows larger. There is huge need to help people restore the connection between what ends up on their plate and the land that it comes from and to also encourage a new generation of farmers to settle on the rich agricultural lands of New Hampshire. To pursue this endeavor is to connect the health of our residents with the health of our soils and to invest in the economic powerhouse that the local foods movement has proven itself to be.

Investing in agriculture is an economic development endeavor to grow opportunities for entrepreneurship as well as an investment in public health. According to a study conducted by Jeffries Alix Partners, Millennials align themselves with the “food movement,” organic farms, and small batch food that carries an ethical or traceable story. While their restaurant habits trend toward cheap and convenient, they are willing to pay more for organic, natural, specialty, and farm-to-table food, and will go to great lengths to find it ([Forbes](#)).

The Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan, provides ample opportunities for young residents to buy their own homes and land, pursue farming initiatives, and start families in New Hampshire. While this loan program is profoundly beneficial to many Millennials, it is under-represented and under-advertised.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Continue and increase support of food system and farm support organizations like the invaluable University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and the Small & Beginner Farmers of New Hampshire.
2. Create a Food and Farm Statewide Council to address the potential of some of the following goals:
 - a. Adopting procurement policies that prioritize purchasing locally grown products at state and local government agencies and at public institutions
 - b. Identifying barriers to success for family-scale farms in New Hampshire both in the wholesale/retail and direct to consumer markets
 - c. Re-evaluating the New Hampshire definition of “local” and “locally-produced” products to see if it is serving the goals of the state, our producers, and our consumers
 - d. Bringing back agricultural land conservation easement funding at the State level to help prevent precious farmland from development



Environment

3. Analyze baseline policy of surrounding states.
4. Financial support of the New Hampshire Food Alliance whose goal is to engage all New Hampshire Food System's players in an equitable way.
5. Increase awareness of *The Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan*.



Workforce Development

Summary: New Hampshire is experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in our State's history and businesses are adding workers at the fastest pace since 2000. Our aging population, growing skills/education gaps, and an outflow of the labor force to other states have all contributed to a workforce shortage in the Granite State. According to the New Hampshire Center for Public Policy Studies, "New Hampshire employers will essentially run out of people to hire [and] the economy is anticipated to grind to a halt [by 2020]" (January 2017).

It's time to make a significant investment in our state's workforce and help our state retain, recruit and develop a pool of skilled individuals deserving of the industry-leading companies that call the Granite State home.

Focus Areas

Work/Life Balance: New Hampshire is an attractive place to live, work and raise a family because it has ample opportunities for outdoor recreation, culture, and community engagement.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Appropriate wages for employees in New Hampshire should continue to be analyzed to ensure New Hampshire wages are competitive with the surrounding region and we are able to attract the best and brightest from around the globe. Living wages should be encouraged to ensure the highest quality of life for New Hampshire workers.
2. Create wage comparisons and costs of living to other areas and outline benefit options of working and living in New Hampshire.
3. New Hampshire benefits from its varying landscapes and active population. Advertise the outdoor recreation economy and lifestyle to attract and retain young workers throughout the state.
4. Outline the importance of the creative economy including the arts and culture sector of the economy helps to retain young and youth-minded professionals.
5. Support the voluntary adoption of family friendly policies in the workplace.

Skills and Training: Develop a pipeline of talent to support the growth of current businesses and attract new businesses.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Reduce negative stigma associated with trade and advanced manufacturing jobs.
2. Expand and create business and education partnerships to develop early and ongoing training opportunities across sectors (e.g. 65 by 25 and School to Career Pathways).
3. Improve college/higher education responsiveness to business community needs (e.g. technical skills, trade skills, etc.).
4. Offer credentialing models to additional industry sectors.



Workforce Development

Credentialing: Expand reciprocity for professional credentials to improve the ability of people to come to New Hampshire from other states or countries and help fill gaps in the labor force by eliminating barriers to work.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Formalize articulation agreements between technical schools and institutions of higher education.
2. Explore strategies for international reciprocity for credentials for foreign born skilled workers.
3. Work with associations and professional credentialing organizations/societies to ease the process for state-to-state reciprocity.

Business Incentives: Encourage the hiring of new employees for entry level positions with economic incentives.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Incentivize New Hampshire companies to hire recent New Hampshire graduates, those moving to New Hampshire from out-of-state, or new positions by providing a tax credit that would offset the companies BET or BPT.
2. Increase the available tax credits for companies creating jobs in Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZ).
3. Explore incentives that specifically target small businesses, allowing them to reinvest and grow faster.



Look Ahead

To this point, the Council has concentrated on setting up the mechanisms and processes that will guide them, as well as broadly examining issue areas. The focus so far has been on the direct experience of the Council membership. In the upcoming year, the Council aims to expand the number of voices that are heard in their meetings by bringing in guest speakers and inviting more public comment. The Council wants to learn from the experiences of other Millennials and interested groups and use that knowledge to help suggest effective policy. Going forward, the Council wants to diversify the location of their meetings, which will include hitting the road to hear from Millennials in communities across the state.

