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Press Release

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New Hampshire Selected by U.S. Department of Agriculture for Pilot Projects to Provide Transitional Housing for People in Recovery from Substance Use Disorders

CONCORD – Building on Governor Maggie Hassan's comprehensive strategy to combat the heroin and opioid crisis and support those battling addiction, New Hampshire has been selected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to participate in two pilot projects aimed at increasing transitional housing for people recovering from opioid and other substance use disorders.

Announced yesterday afternoon by USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, the pilot projects are part of a USDA initiative that emerged from Secretary Vilsack's visit to New Hampshire in May, where participants in the drug court program at the Hillsborough County Superior Court highlighted the importance of affordable housing to a robust, long-term recovery system. During his visit to New Hampshire in May, Secretary Vilsack was also one of the keynote speakers at the first-ever New Hampshire Governor's Summit on Substance Misuse

"Granite Staters in recovery have made a profound difference in our efforts to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, inspiring us with their courage and advocating for critical initiatives and resources," Governor Hassan said. "Participants in our drug court program helped spur the development of this initiative, exemplifying the very best of our vibrant citizen-led democracy here in New Hampshire."

The two pilot projects are part of USDA's initiative to make financing available for the construction, expansion and improvement of transitional housing facilities through USDA Rural Development's Rural Housing Service Community Facilities program and to encourage qualified non-profits to purchase single-family homes and multi-family properties exiting USDA's Real Estate Owned (REO) housing program and convert them into transitional housing facilities.

New Hampshire was one of four states selected for the "Contract for Deed" pilot in the Single Family Housing program, which make USDA-held REOs available for qualified non-profits to purchase at below-market-rate costs in order to provide housing for homeless individuals recovering from substance misuse.

The other pilot project is aimed at incentivizing rentals of vacant units in USDA multi-family rental housing properties by making them eligible for rental assistance if they are occupied by a current participant of a drug court program. New Hampshire is one of four states where facilities are eligible for the pilot project.

"I commend Secretary Vilsack and the U.S. Department of Agriculture for using the feedback that they received here in New Hampshire in a constructive manner, and for selecting New Hampshire as a participant in these pilot projects," Governor Hassan said. "Both of these projects will help build on our comprehensive strategy to combat the heroin and opioid crisis, which includes providing additional resources for supportive housing and establishing a statewide drug court program."

Earlier this year, Governor Hassan signed bipartisan measures establishing a statewide drug court program and providing an additional \$2 million for supportive housing, as well as additional resources for prevention, treatment and recovery programs. In addition to those measures, the Governor has signed several other bipartisan bills this year, which reflect most of the comprehensive proposal that she put forward when calling for a special session of the legislature last fall, including cracking down on fentanyl, establishing a statewide grant program to assist local law enforcement in seizing illicit drugs and arresting dealers, limiting prior authorization requirements for treatment, making improvements to New Hampshire's prescription drug monitoring program, requiring all prescribing boards to update prescribing rules for opioids, and providing funding to upgrade technology for the prescription drug monitoring program.

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[For more information on the initiative announced by the USDA, click here.](#)

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