



Capital Project Oversight Committee

January 12, 2026

Testimony of Elizabeth Chilton, President, University of New Hampshire

As a residential campus for more than 6,000 of our 11,000 undergraduate students, the University of New Hampshire (UNH) takes great care in the campus community we offer to each of our students. For many students, this is their first time living away from home, and we take seriously the responsibility to provide them with a supportive and comfortable environment in which to live and learn.

The two projects outlined in this request highlight critical renovations needed to address over fifty years of heavy use and age on two of our primary first-year student residence halls, Christensen and Williamson, which together house almost 900 students. Both facilities are in urgent need of updates to heating and plumbing systems, as well as lavatory facilities that have seen a great deal of use since their construction in 1970. Beyond providing a safe, efficient, and welcoming community for our student residents, we also see tremendous value and return on investment in creating a space that our prospective students and families are proud of when they first visit campus on an admissions tour.

Living on campus positively impacts student persistence and engagement, especially for the first two years. Given that we require most first- and second-year students to live on campus, it's crucial that we provide up-to-date facilities that meet student expectations. This investment in our primary first-year residence halls will provide immense return on the student experience and likelihood of them remaining in on-campus housing as they continue their educational experience.

On behalf of the University of New Hampshire, we kindly request that these projects be approved by the committee so we can continue to ensure a comfortable learning and living environment for our student body. I am pleased to turn the floor over to Bill Janelle, our Associate Vice President for Facilities, to share more details about the projects.