



February 14, 2020

Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



To my constituents in [Allenstown](#), [Epsom](#), & [Pittsfield](#):

This week, my committee held a lot of subcommittee work sessions, then recommended 11 bills to the full House. I worked extensively on the most important, HB 1642, which bans the state from engaging in facial recognition technology and protects the DMV database of pictures from being used for such a search. We made an exception for police cooperating with federal agencies that use facial recognition, but banned them from soliciting such data. The opposition in committee was concerned about taking a tool away from law enforcement; the rest of us agreed that the technology was flawed, but had the potential to create a police state if it were reliable. We voted, 18-2, to protect everyone's privacy.

HB 1122, adding suicide as a job-related death for first responders, passed 18-1. We debated this for a while, and I was finally convinced that death benefits would not be given for suicide without a full investigation proving that it was, in fact, job related. HB 1189, repealing the ban on expense payments or per diems for the genetic counselors' board, passed 19-0, with minimal discussion.

HB 1434, repealing the contribution for medical coverage for state retirees 65 or older but under 70, (a walloping 10% of the actual cost of their care), had no funding and therefore the cost would simply be shifted to either younger retirees or shared among all retirees as a cheaper plan, with higher co-pays and deductibles. The sponsor and supporters insisted that they had been promised "free health care for life" and ignored the asterisk that said "as funded by the legislature." Since the 2009 budget started charging under-65 retirees for

their health care (at 12.5%, since raised to 20%) every retiree under 70 is well aware that what the legislature gives, it can take away. Nonetheless, HB 1434 passed, 14-5.

HB 1580, my bill on drones, was amended extensively, but we maintained the basic points that drones should not be armed, violating someone's privacy with a drone is a crime, and law enforcement should not use drones to gather information without a warrant. The vote was 14-6, with the opposition concerned about people's freedom to videotape via drone in public places.

HB 1445, adding a building scientist to the state building code review board, was quickly and unanimously killed since there is no clear definition of building scientist. HB 1315, making licenses for allied health professionals always expire after two years rather than renewing at the end of the year, passed unanimously, as did HB 1326, requiring the pension system to report investment fees in more detail. I had some concerns about some types of investments, but was convinced to vote for transparency.

HB 1491, adding more professions to those eligible for a quick, temporary license, passed 20-0. HB 1545, on regulations for interpreters for the deaf, also was quickly recommended to pass, 20-0. HB 1709, on building code and zoning regulations for home-based child care businesses, was unanimously killed at the sponsor's request. HB 1587, which would require licensing locksmiths, was quickly killed, 20-0.

We also met in session, with a rather short calendar, interrupted by the governor's state of the state address. First we suspended the rules to introduce and pass SJR 2, granting the state medal of honor to a New Hampshire native who was killed in Afghanistan. Then we passed, with



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speeches, HB 1135, naming a part of Route 49 in honor of another soldier killed in action.

HB 1103, requiring evidence in divorce cases be revealed to the other party 5 days before a hearing, had an interesting debate. Supporters pointed out the problem of “ambush” evidence, which can complicate a contentious divorce; opponents were also concerned that delay and multiple continuances are also a problem, as they increase costs for both parties and draw out the time before a divorce is final. The bill was killed, 188-136; I voted against but was less certain of that than I had been before the debate. HB 1258, establishing a study committee on youth issues with internet media, was debated and killed, 174-153. I voted against because the Republicans on the committee were strongly in support of the bill; we will reconsider this vote next week.

HB 1335, giving parents the right to sue schools when there has been gross misconduct in bullying cases, was debated and killed, 183-142. I voted against killing it because there are about 2,000 reported cases of bullying a year, and many cases are unreported; “gross misconduct” seems to be something we want to stop, and apparently school districts haven't taken appropriate action. HB 1681, on school lunch reimbursements, was amended to become a study committee and passed, without debate. I spoke (mildly) against HB 1691, which would grant new full day kindergarten programs state funding in the first year, since this is an optional program and I believe we need to fully fund mandates before options. I was insufficiently convincing, and the bill passed, 263-64.

HB 1339, which would allow farmers more discretion on killing wild animals that are damaging their crops or livestock, was killed, 199-129. No debate, but the committee report was that they expected more animals to be killed; I voted

for the bill because it make sense to shoot the fox before he kills every hen, or the bear before every hive has been destroyed.

HB 1450, changing the zoning board of adjustment's criteria, was killed without comment. HB 1452, repealing the need to offer a fired library employee a public hearing, was briefly debated and killed, 202-124. HB 1615, requiring criminal background checks for people putting on library sponsored events, was killed without debate.

HB 1568, prohibiting town employees and officials from profiting from businesses that contract with the town, was debated on several issues. Supporters cited a fuel oil company that got a bid for heating town buildings despite a higher price than others, by offering town employees a discount on *their* fuel buys; opponents were concerned about vagueness and employee discounts at health clubs. The bill was killed, 181-148, largely on party lines.

HB 1649, increasing car registration fees for more fuel efficient vehicles, (to make up for the gas taxes they don't pay), was not tabled, 120-206, debated at length, then not passed, 144-173, and killed by acclamation. The opposition was mixed between those opposed to the tax, those who wanted to support electric and high-mileage cars, and those concerned about the fairness of this particular tax, since it would disproportionately affect those driving older, less efficient cars. Representative Allard voted for it, I voted against, and Representative Klose was excused from the session.

We did pass HB 1605, requiring children under 2 be restrained in a rear-facing child seat. It was not tabled, 134-175, then debated, with opponents pointing out that the bill required violating federal safety standards and manufacturers'



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recommendations. It still passed, 182-128. It's on its way to the Senate, and I hope they fix some of the more glaring issues with the bill.

HB 1700, on granting temporary driver's licenses to aliens living in New Hampshire while awaiting their asylum hearings, was debated and passed, 177-128. Even if this is a temporary fix for a few people, I'm concerned that not having any indication of citizenship on the license enables voter fraud.



Carol McGuire

Representative Carol McGuire
carol@mcguire4house.com
782-4918