



January 8, 2021

# Your State House

## Concord, New Hampshire



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

This week, the House met, as required by the constitution, to certify the election of the governor and the executive council. No protests over these; the peaceful protesters were opposing our meeting in our cars, in the UNH parking lot (not sure if they wanted us to be remote or in person, at the State House.) Not an ideal method, as bottlenecks entering meant that we started over an hour late, and signals to speak involved honking horns and flashing lights.

We elected Sherm Packard of Londonderry as Speaker, replacing Dick Hinch who died with Covid a week after his election. We also adopted House rules, with current deadlines and an allowance for remote or hybrid committee meetings. A number of amendments to the rules were considered, mostly voted down, including fully remote sessions, formal bans on guns and alcohol in the chamber, and mandates to committee chairs on how to run their meetings. I spoke against that one, as micromanaging seldom works out as planned. We did adopt some formatting changes.

The Minority Leader objected to the party assignment on the Finance Committee, which was twelve Republicans and nine Democrats; the explanation was that everything in Finance is done in their three divisions, so 12/9 works out nicely. He moved that it be changed to eleven Republicans and ten Democrats, which was debated and denied, 113-170. I had some of the same issue in my committee where we have ten and nine, but four subcommittees. So one subcommittee has two Republicans and three Democrats, but it's the one that deals with the least partisan subject

(rulemaking.) The others are three and two, but my vice-chair has to do double duty.

I had to leave for an appointment after the vote on the Finance committee, but I heard a motion for a bipartisan resolution condemning the violence in Washington. It passed, 236-35.

It's going to be an interesting session. I'm planning committee orientation for next week, all remote: the format of one person lecturing and then questions from the committee works pretty well remotely. Public hearings on bills start the following week, and will be hybrid: the committee will meet in the legislative office building, much more spread out than usual, but the public will have to call in. Committee members who can't attend in person will also call in. I don't know how this will work, but we'll see.

I hope this session will be less aggressively partisan, but so far it doesn't look like it will. I hope we can work together on the many issues that are non-partisan.



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