



Your State House

Concord, New Hampshire



March 5, 2021

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

This week, my committee heard four bills on declaring and operating a state of emergency: HB 275, HB 414, HB 417, and HB 433. Since they all dealt with the same section of laws, we heard them together and discussed them as a group. They intended to require the legislature to approve extensions of a state of emergency, or the executive orders themselves, so the emergency manager from Nashua spoke against any delay in reacting to an emergency. The sections that allowed someone to decline to evacuate, at the risk of not receiving any help, was argued among the committee members: we have four firefighters on the committee, and they were strongly against not helping people evacuate, forcibly if necessary. Oddly, we had almost no public input on any of these bills.

Then we met to vote on HB 128, which adds a public notice to the weather modification statute. We all felt that this was appropriate, and voted 18-1 in favor. We also unanimously approved HB 283, Wentworth Cheswill day, with an amendment to make it a one-time commemoration; HB 273, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 26th amendment, which lowered the voting age to 18; and (less one vote) HB 155, declaring Indigenous People's Day. On this bill, we amended it to add the holiday on August 9, which is the UN holiday, and leave Columbus Day alone.

We debated HB 544, banning divisive concepts such as critical race theory by state agencies and contractors. An amendment by the sponsor to narrow the focus of the bill passed 17-1, but the debate on the bill itself was heated. The opposition interpreted it as racism and an attack on free

speech; supporters saw it as preventing teaching from the presumption of white racism and oppression. The committee vote was 10-9, on party lines.

We also debated, at length, my HB 606, amending the barbering and cosmetology law to remove free services from the criminal section. This turned into a partisan issue, with fear-mongering about "chemicals" that could damage people. I was also very concerned that the opponents were relying on selective prosecution to assure us that cutting one's husband's hair or trimming a baby's fingernails would never be penalized. We voted in favor, 10-8.



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