



February 11, 2022

# Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



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

This week, the House continued with committee work. My committee heard HB 1321, which repealed all the changes we had made to the governor's emergency powers in the last year, including the sponsor's own HB 1037. That was recommended to be killed, 17-1.

HB 1274, establishing a study committee on state agencies' solid waste practices, didn't garner to much enthusiasm from the committee, especially after we learned that there already exists at least one study committee on solid waste issues.

HB 1171, exempting some “niche” beauty services (hair styling, eyelash extensions, makeup application) from licensure, brought us the biggest crowd since the midwives. The board of cosmetology has voted to oppose the bill, and we were flooded with emails talking about the need for licensing to protect the public. Several pro-liberty organizations sent people to testify in favor of the bill: the Institute for Justice, Americans for Prosperity, and the Josiah Bartlett Center. It went to subcommittee to deal with the consumer protection definitions, which the Attorney General said were too broad and too different from existing law. HB 1560, reciprocal licenses for barbering and cosmetology, was simpler and less crowded, with the same people as HB 1171 testifying. It, too, went to subcommittee.

HB 1545, creating a film database, was unanimously recommended to kill since the sponsor found Travel & Tourism already uses one! HB 1287, sleep awareness month, HB 1443, Covid victims memorial day, and HB 1173, proclaiming Indigenous People's day, all were skeptically

received and will probably be killed.

We continued to vote out nineteen more bills. HB 1535, which granted a cost of living increase to people retired at least 5 years, was amended and recommended to pass. The amendment left the current year increase, but deleted the retirement system's mandate to give future increases based on Social Security's increases. That was estimated to have about a \$2 billion dollar cost increase, and the vast majority would be paid through our local property taxes. The amendment also required that the initial increase be funded from this year's surplus, so there would be no property tax impact.

We sent several bills to interim study, seeing merit in the idea of each but not agreeing on the details: my HB 1191, allowing homeowners to work on duplexes as well as single family homes; HB 1429, licensing massage establishments; HB 1444, registering medical spas; and HB 1566, on the prescription drug affordability board. These bills would have gone to a second committee, so we'd run out of time to work on them now.

HB 1354, allowing real estate brokers and agents to receive deferred compensation after they go on inactive status, was amended to specify “passed” rather than “taken” the state specific examination, and otherwise clarify the requirements for people with licenses from other states. It was recommended unanimously to pass as amended.

HB 1497, on optional allowances from the retirement system, was amended to include the language from HB 1557 (which amended the same paragraph of law) and then recommended to pass. We reconsidered HB 1557, and voted to keep it in interim study until we were sure HB 1497 passed.

My HB 1563, enrolling state employees in the deferred compensation plan, was voted to kill, 17-1. Not me – after considering the matter, I decided



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it was more appropriate to start as a request from the governor, or the employees, than as a mandate from the legislature. HB 1552, transferring the assessor certification function from revenue administration to a new board under the OPLC, passed with a minor amendment to continue all current licenses until their expiration. We killed HB 1314, a study on management of the state veterans' home, because a previous study (in 2014) still had open actions and the veterans didn't agree on what else they wanted.

HB 1427, on membership of the speech-language pathology board, was amended to allow for alternate members; HB 1681, updating the state building code, was amended to include the fire code, and both passed unanimously.

HB 1357, on land acknowledgment, was not so harmonious. An amendment to correct spelling errors (Abenaki is not in spell check!) passed 17-1, then a motion to pass with amendment failed, 8-10. After more debate, we voted to kill it, 10-8, not quite party line (one member of each party voted with the other.) The deciding issue for me was that various tribes in New Hampshire were opposed to the bill, as it only recognized one tribe. HB 1587, which restored some of the changes made to retirement formulas in 2011, was argued at length, and recommended to pass, 12-6. I was on the losing side of this vote – after all, I voted for those changes in 2011 and don't want to see them all reversed. I also voted in the minority for HB 1460, which repealed the minimum ages for a number of professional licenses: we voted to kill it, 12-6. I thought many of these requirements were silly, requiring veterinarians, attorneys and dentists be at least 18 while meeting all the educational requirements!

HB 1288, on terms of some officials in the

department of administrative services, was amended to change some titles and passed.

We voted to kill HB 1065, authorizing licenses for art therapists, on a party-line basis, with minimal debate. HB 1417, requiring the state to pay 7.5% of municipalities' pension contributions, was debated and killed, also on a party-line vote. I (and most Republicans) were opposed because the towns decide how many employees to have and how much to pay them – so having the state take a fixed share of the payment (which is a percentage of payroll) means the frugal subsidize the spendthrift. In addition, we fear that state funds can mean state control: how many teachers to have, how much to pay our police officers...

Next week we meet in session to vote on most of these bills; in Manchester again, for probably the last time out of the State House. We have a lot of representatives who have never met in the House chamber, and it's a shame.



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