



Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



March 18, 2022

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

This week, the House met for three long days to meet our deadline for acting on House bills not in a second committee. As usual, we killed more (usually bad) bills than we passed (hopefully good) ones; since we were on a deadline, many bills were tabled to avoid debate. After this week, they would need a 2/3 vote for any action, so it's much the same result as voting to kill them. First, we dealt with 149 non controversial bills, including 10 from my committee, all at once.

HB 1280, confirming that vaccination status should not be used to terminate parental rights, had a short debate before passing on a voice vote. HB 1286, on modification of parental rights and responsibilities, was debated, at length, on whether or not it was necessary to replace "any of" with "only" before the list of allowable circumstances. It wasn't until the final speaker that I finally heard an understandable reason to decide on this: many applicants in family court represent themselves, and *they* don't always understand that only circumstances on the list will be considered! Nonetheless, the bill was killed, 176-155, probably because the ineffective debate had convinced many to vote on party lines.

HB 1305, on temporary alimony, was briefly debated and killed on a voice vote. HB 1382, on the presumption of shared parenting, was debated and passed, 177-157. HB 1396, requiring the date child support payments are due, was tabled before debate. HB 1416, consent for mental health treatment when parents share responsibilities, was not tabled, 28-305, then amended and passed on voice votes. HB 1431, establishing the parental bill of rights, was debated and passed, 181-157. HB

1518, requiring appointed guardians have a home visit to make sure the home is safe for the child, passed without comment. HB 1612, having DHHS warn people making claims of child abuse or neglect that making false complaints may result in their names being released and opening them to suits, was debated and passed, 175-161. HB 1614, requiring surveillance video in all juvenile detention facilities be retained for the complete statute of limitations, passed on a voice vote.

HB 1019, a study committee on replacing professional licenses with liability insurance requirements, was debated over whether to kill it immediately or send it to interim study (which ensures it will not pass this year.) Interim study won out, so I hope the committee actually studies it! HB 1028, allowing short term medical insurance policies, likewise went to interim study without comment.

When we finish a debate, before anything but a voice vote, each side usually makes a "parliamentary inquiry (PI)," which should be one or two questions leading up to "push the green (or red) button." Properly done, it emphasizes the most important points of the debate; poorly done, it sounds like an awkward speech. Many of the bills that did not have debates just had these PIs, relying on the written reports in the calendar to make their case. HB 1380, requiring homeowners' associations to allow solar panels regardless of their covenants, was killed, 200-131, after some strikingly poor PIs.

HB 1413, trying to hold internet service providers liable for privacy violations, was debated and killed, 289-47. HB 1503, exempting cryptocurrencies from securities laws, also adopts the current draft of the new Section 12 of the Uniform Commercial Code. The committee



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amendment adding the code language was adopted, a motion to table failed, 149-188, and the bill was debated at some length. It passed, 187-150, after the person making the PI in favor admitted he didn't understand it!

HB 1583, allowing state liquor stores be open on all holidays, was debated on whether it was appropriate to ask the employees to work on Easter or Christmas. Since this is already allowed if the employees agree, the bill passed 278-58.

CACR 20, a constitutional amendment to place the right to possess and use cannabis in the constitution, was not tabled, 165-166, debated, and killed, 214-121. CACR 34, prohibiting any laws against use of cannabis, and CACR 35, granting adults the right to grow, possess, and use cannabis, subject to regulation by law, were both tabled before debate.

HB 1004, making it a crime to leave the scene of a dog harming a person without giving one's information, and HB 1017, making it a crime to harm an essential worker, were both killed without comment. HB 1072, making it a crime for a school to deny access to an elected official, was tabled, 169-161, prior to debate. Wednesday, a motion to remove it from the table failed, 177-180.

HB 1085, requiring an ignition interlock for all vehicles registered to the alcohol offender, rather than just their "regular" vehicle, passed without comment. HB 1096, prohibiting open carry of a firearm within 100 feet of a polling place, was debated and killed, 190-153. HB 1105, on earned time credits, went to interim study without comment. HB 1108, allowing landowners to post with purple paint rather than signs, was debated extensively and killed, 239-102. HB 1117, attempting to restrict criminal threatening of "any

person" to specified groups was debated and killed, 187-154. HB 1127, granting posthumous exonerations (including one to a Massachusetts resident who was convicted of witchcraft), went to interim study, 251-88, after some debate.

HB 1178, prohibiting the state from enforcing any federal law or order that restricts our right to bear arms, was not tabled, 153-187, debated, and passed, 190-147. I missed that vote as I'd expected it to be longer, and didn't come back in time, but at least it wasn't close! HB 1266, allowing law enforcement to respond to an immigration detainer on someone who is in custody for another reason, was also debated and passed, 172-162. HB 1296, tying a criminal asset forfeiture case more closely to the underlying criminal case, passed without comment.

HB 1306, legalizing personal possession of cannabis, was tabled, 309-28, since the House has already passed at least two more comprehensive legalization bills this year. Likewise, HB 1348, legalizing possession and cultivation, was tabled without comment. HB 1361, creating a penalty for bringing a controlled drug into the state, was debated, not passed, 153-187, then killed, 207-131. HB 1400, prohibiting law enforcement from using the scent of marijuana as probable cause for a search, was tabled, 168-157, since this is already settled case law.

HB 1414, requiring the state police to report on the demographic status of those stopped for traffic violations, was killed without comment. After extensive debate, we passed, 199-134, HB 1476, a revision to the bail laws requiring offenders who were *already* out on bail to see a judge before release. From the debate I gathered a lot of the concerns would be resolved if a judge were available 24/7. HB 1512, granting parole hearings



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after someone served 25 years (including those serving sentences of life without parole,) was debated and killed, 182-127.

HB 1539, removing some crime reports from the state police website, was killed without comment; HB 1600, requiring video documentation of all police interviews, was quietly tabled, as the majority wished to study the costs and logistics of the proposal before imposing this requirement on all police departments. HB 1668, requiring all private sales of firearms include a background check, is this year's version of a perennial attempt to end private transfers. It was debated and killed, 179-144, as expected.

Now, at 4:45 Tuesday, we started the third committee, Education. HB 1047, reconstituting the charter school oversight committee, was killed, 173-152. HB 1051, allowing schools to refuse to accept credits earned in the Learn Everywhere and other alternative programs, was debated and killed, 174-147. HB 1090, repealing the ban on assuming inherent racism (so-called divisive concepts), was tabled, 165-153. HB 1113, prohibiting the ban on remote learning, was killed 166-154.

HB 1114, requiring EFA (education freedom accounts) providers be listed on the scholarship organization website, was killed without comment, as was HB 1115, requiring EFA students to all use the state-wide annual assessment, rather than the options currently available for home schooled and other students. HB 1120, new requirements for providers in the EFA program, was debated and killed, 165-155.

HB 1131, forbidding mask mandates in schools, was amended on a voice vote, debated on a floor amendment that deleted the enforcement mechanism, which was voted down 152-168,

debated on the bill, then passed, 166-157. HB 1132, deleting the approval of school staff and teachers when converting to a charter school, was debated and passed, 164-148. HB 1137, on the duties of school boards, went to interim study without comment.

HB 1152, requiring additional income verification for EFA students, was killed without discussion. HB 1190, forbidding the state board of education from adopting rules implementing federal programs without full funding, passed 166-146. HB 1233, forbidding higher education from requiring Covid vaccinations or face masks, was tabled on a voice vote so that we wouldn't have to debate between interim study and killing the bill. HB 1241, forbidding a school district from requiring Covid vaccinations, passed 166-148.

HB 1261, forbidding the use of native American mascots, had a overly-long debate before being killed, 170-143. HB 1283, repealing the provision that EFA monies are not taxable income, was tabled without discussion. HB 1298, expanding the education tax credit scholarship eligibility from 300% of poverty to 500%, was debated and passed, 159-152. A motion to reconsider failed, 152-162, and we left for the night.

Wednesday, HB 1332, exempting colleges from the rights of conscience on immunizations, was tabled, 172-142. HB 1355, revising the EFA language on misuse of funds, was killed without comment. HB 1367, collecting data on civics instructions, passed without discussion. HB 1376, on increasing notifications about special education in the EFA program, was tabled, 179-153.

HB 1381, adding high school students to school boards, passed quietly. HB 1434, ensuring curriculum materials are available to residents and



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parents, passed 185-152. HB 1564, requiring schools to provide breakfast, would be an unfunded mandate for the 30 schools (of 466!) that do not currently provide breakfast. It was debated and killed, 180-160. HB 1576, another attempt to repeal the law prohibiting discrimination in education, was tabled, 186-158, as was HB 1607, prohibiting discrimination in non-public schools, 189-155. This was an attempt to deny religious private schools the right to discriminate on the basis of religion, which is inherent in their function.

HB 1632, adding civil rights instruction to the course of instruction in history and civics, was tabled on a voice vote. HB 1638, making the school superintendent the first judge in a civil rights complaint, was tabled 190-152. HB 1639, making the youth risk behavior survey opt-in, like all other non-academic surveys, rather than opt-out, passed 183-164 after some debate.

HB 1669, requiring the department of education administer the EFA program directly rather than contracting it out, was tabled, 185-158, as was HB 1670, adding more administrative requirements to the EFA program, 188-163. HB 1672, on misuse of EFA funds, was killed without comment. HB 1683, repealing the EFA program, was debated and killed, 189-166.

CACR 15, reducing the age to vote in a primary to 17, was debated on the amendment, which totally replaced the wording and, instead, specified residency requirements for voting. The amendment was adopted, 192-163, after more debate the constitutional amendment failed to pass, 190-165 (constitutional amendments require 3/5 of the legislators to pass, or 267 when there are 400 of us; we're down a few right now, so it's only 235 votes, but that's still a high bar.) CACR 19, requiring

paper ballots, also failed to gain the necessary 235, with the vote of 195-160.

HB 1009, requiring the date a person registers to vote be included in the voter database, was debated and passed, 185-167. The issue was largely pre-2006 registrations which don't include this date, and the idea supervisors of the checklist would need to comb through old records to update the database – although there's no deadline specified! HB 1082, forbidding candidates for state treasurer or secretary of state from forming a PAC, had a short debate before tying at 176-176; the Speaker broke the tie to pass the bill.

HB 1153, prohibiting absentee ballots being sent along with the registration application, passed 185-158, since this (already illegal) practice has occurred! HB 1203, clarifying definitions of resident and inhabitant in election law, was debated and passed, 185-163. HB 1247, requiring *all* folded ballots (normally, absentee ballots are the only ones folded) be hand counted, was killed, 203-145; I, and many Republicans, voted against killing it because the last election showed that folded ballots can confuse the machines, and we don't expect a surge of absentee ballots again.

HB 1264, authorizing ranked choice voting for primaries and local elections, had tied the committee, so it had no recommendation; it was tabled 206-142 as several representatives lined up to speak on it. We were grateful to the test elections using candy and ice cream, but not enough to listen to an extended debate! Later in the evening, a motion to take it off the table failed, 116-219.

HB 1326, requiring business organizations follow the same rules as unions regarding political contributions, was debated and killed, 185-161, as



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was HB 1394, requiring LLCs to allocate any political contributions to the members of the LLC, 187-163. HB 1442, requiring municipalities to prepare ballots in up to three languages other than English, if more than 3% of the population “frequently” speaks another language, was killed 195-156, since current (federal) law requires it to be done if 5% of the population does not speak English well, according to census data. No locality in New Hampshire comes close to meeting that standard.

HB 1567, providing a way to remove an election official from office in the case of misconduct, passed 187-165, since there are only criminal penalties in current law.

HB 1454, revising the setbacks for new landfills, passed without comment.

From my committee, I tabled HB 1065, creating a new license for art therapists, 180-150. After some debate, the committee amendment to HB 1135 passed, 187-148, moving the performance audit of the education freedom account program out a year so that we would have a full year of data to audit. As amended, the bill passed on a voice vote. HB 1171, exempting some specialty beauty services from licensure, was debated and passed, 201-147. HB 1173, proclaiming August 9 as indigenous people's day, was killed without comment, much to my surprise.

On the other hand, HB 1357, on land acknowledgment, was quickly killed on a voice vote – but the Deputy Speaker, in the chair, had missed that it was to be debated. So he asked for reconsideration, which passed, 238-94, and the speakers took their place... A motion to table failed, 163-178, and after debate the bill was killed, 183-151. Much time wasted on a foregone conclusion...

On HB 1330, we debated and passed, 175-168, the committee amendment which repealed the registration requirement for medical technicians,. A minority amendment to restore the registration and clarify the board authority was briefly debated and not passed, 167-184; HB 1330 as amended then passed on a voice vote. HB 1510, a study committee on state hiring practices, was quickly killed on a voice vote, and HB 1560, granting barber/cosmetology licenses to out of state applicants, passed without comment.

HB 103, establishing an adult dental benefit under medicaid, passed 237-100 with no debate! I was opposed because it's creating a new entitlement. HB 1677, appropriating \$100 million to settle claims for abuse at the Sununu Youth Center, was debated and passed on a voice vote, after an amendment to add emotional abuse to the settlement scope, (and triple the per-person limit,) was debated and killed, 164-177.

HB 1091, requiring search warrants for fish & game enforcement, went to interim study without discussion. HB 1297, allowing a license for scuba drivers to take lobster, passed 197-143 without debate. HB 1356, on gray squirrels, was not tabled, 156-182, amended to allow year-round hunting, 194-147, and passed on a voice vote.

HB 1022, allowing a standing order for pharmacists to dispense ivermectin, was debated and passed, 183-159. This would be for Covid and other viruses; everyone agreed that ivermectin is safe, but not that it was effective for viruses. HB 1044, allowing health care facilities that don't accept third party payments, was debated and not killed, 171-172; not tabled, 166-179; amended to also allow membership plans, 334-10, then passed by acclamation.



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HB 1077, repealing the ban on conversion therapy for minors, was tabled, 197-147. HB 1080, on the rights of conscience for medical professionals, was debated and passed, 175-165. The opposition seemed concerned that a conscientious position that an abortion was necessary in a specific case (beyond 24 weeks) was not respected.

HB 1180, state recognition of biological sex, was not tabled, 167-169, then the committee amendment failed on a 170-170 tie. After a lengthy debate, the bill was tabled, 175-167. HB 1347, exempting from the moratorium on new nursing homes and rehabilitation centers facilities that operate either on a membership model or direct pay, was tabled on a voice vote. The more comprehensive HB 1044 made this bill unnecessary.

HB 1369, explicitly allowing entertainment venues to require vaccinations, masks or other public health policies, was tabled, 177-146. HB 1379, codifying the authority to require vaccinations for schools in law, rather than as currently split between law and rules, passed 169-164 without debate. HB 1409, lowering the age of consent (without involving the parents except to pay for it!) for mental health treatment to 16, was tabled 171-163.

HB 1439, on hospital visitation policies, was debated on *how* to ensure that nobody died alone and family could visit with terminal patients, regardless of masks and vaccination status. The committee amendment, requiring facilities to determine their policies and post them publicly, was adopted by a voice vote. The minority amendment, which just put visitation into the patient's bill of rights, was debated and failed, 158-177. The bill then passed on a voice vote. HB 1481, repealing the law respecting medical

freedom in immunizations, was tabled, 175-156. HB 1495, forbidding the state to mandate vaccine status for its contractors, was debated and passed, 179-153.

CACR 18, putting a right to abortion in the constitution, was tabled, 175-157, as it obviously would not receive a 60% vote. HB 1014, allowing public meetings to be conducted virtually, was also tabled, 175-155. HB 1073, clarifying the right to know exemption for attorney-client work product, passed without comment, as did HB 1101, requiring any asset forfeiture made under state law be processed under state law, and not transferred to a federal agency and seized under their broader law.

HB 1107, a study committee on rentals to people with pets, was quietly tabled. HB 1133, prohibiting the termination of a residential lease when property is sold, was quickly killed because that's already the law! HB 1200, requiring 45 day's notice of a rent increase (currently 30 days) was tabled, as was HB 1291, prohibiting discrimination against tenants with Section 8 vouchers, 179-148. HB 1389, establishing a superior court land use docket, went to interim study without comment. HB 1425, providing more protections for real property taken by eminent domain during an emergency, passed 179-150, without debate.

HB 1477, prohibiting abortions after heartbeat, was debated passionately, and at length, before being tabled, 185-143. HB 1490, equal access to public accommodations regardless of vaccination status, was debated, not passed, 161-170, then killed, 171-160. I voted in favor since I think the fad for vaccine passports has gone far enough. HB 1519, adding "religious belief" to various anti-discrimination statutes (many of which already include "religion,") was killed without comment.



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HB 1625, repealing the “buffer zone” around abortion clinics, was debated, not tabled, 160-170, not killed, 162-168, then passed, 168-162. I voted (as I have in previous years) to repeal this violation of free speech, even though it has never been invoked. HB 1673, on the fetal health protection act, had a long debate on the committee amendment, which deleted the penalty provisions, added exceptions such as fetal anomalies or a health emergency, and clarified that the ultrasound requirement is only to verify fetal development. This amendment failed, 163-165; the minority amendment, which only had the ultrasound clarification, passed on a voice vote, as did the bill. This fought off an attempt to repeal the *only* abortion ban, of any type, that New Hampshire has ever been able to pass. After that, HB 1674, establishing reproductive rights to abortion at any time, for any reason, was tabled, 306-19. Obviously even rabid abortion supporters could see that it wasn't going to pass...

On Thursday, we started with the Labor committee. HB 1053, requiring “time and a half” when called in to work, was killed on a voice vote. HB 1076, prohibiting some excessive productivity quotas, was tabled, 169-152. After lunch, a member moved to take it off the table: that failed, 165-171. HB 1088, employee protections from Covid, was killed on a voice vote. HB 1089, on non-compete agreements, was amended to deal with “material change in terms of employment” rather than focusing on Covid issues, then passed on a voice vote. HB 1094, on employee schedules, was killed without comment.

HB 1165, repealing the state paid family leave plan, was not tabled, 160-172, debated and then passed, 172-164. This plan, which passed in last year's budget, hasn't actually started yet, so it's easier to repeal, especially since the plan satisfies

nobody! The Democrats think the payments are too low and the terms are unfair to lower paid workers; the Republicans think it's an unasked for employee benefit (state employees are enrolled at no cost to themselves) that is unnecessary because private insurers are now offering similar products, and the state doesn't need to be involved. It's the governor's pet program, though, so I wonder how this will do if it gets to him.

HB 1210, adding a “right of conscience” exemption to vaccine mandates, had a long debate before passing, 181-155. HB 1251, prohibiting sub-minimum wages (the only one I know of is that for tipped employees) was tabled, 187-149.

HB 1337, on the duration of unemployment benefits, allows the full length of benefits (26 weeks) only when unemployment is 8% or higher; as fewer people are out of work, the maximum length of benefits goes down to 16 weeks at 3%. This should encourage people to go back to work sooner, while reducing the employers' unemployment taxes. The bill was debated and passed, 179-153.

HB 1472, prohibiting anti-union activities by employers, was debated and killed, 181-149, as federal regulations control such activities. HB 1508, prohibiting firing volunteer fire fighters from their other jobs for their emergency duties, was killed without comment. HB 1514, about unused time credits, was not tabled, 168-172, debated, then killed, 172-164.

CACR 23, making all references in the constitutional gender-neutral, was tabled 190-140, as was HB 1007, 186-150, which would allow the legislature find one of its members guilty of insurrection, remove her from office, and ask the community to fill the vacancy.



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HB 1033, prohibiting recipients of state grants from using these funds for lobbying, was tabled, 174-161. I was disappointed at this, since the amendment simply puts the existing restriction into the statutes regulating counties, municipalities, and schools, rather than the current placement in the lobbyist statute.

HB 1041, attempting to unionize legislative staff, was tabled, 187-146. HB 1084, mandatory disclosure of sources of legislation, was killed without comment. HB 1102, cleaning up some incorrect administrative attachments to the department of state, passed quietly. HB 1129, attempting to make the fiscal committee (which deals with transfers and other budget activities year-round) more political, was debated briefly and killed, 188-142.

HB 1170, limiting authority of delegates to an article V convention, was not tabled, 157-186, then debated by some of the worst (but longest and most frequent) debaters in the House. One issue that came up is that it might affect various interstate compacts (driver's license, nurses, etc); I'm sure there were others that didn't rise through the fog! It finally passed, 173-162. HB 1309, a study committee to ensure all sections of the budget trailer bill received a public hearing, was killed, 180-154. HB 1370, a study committee on childcare options for the legislature, was killed, 187-153.

HB 1046, electing Sullivan county commissioners by districts, rather than at large, was debated, not killed, 158-169, then passed, 192-141. I voted for it because if a commissioner represents a single district, only those constituents should elect her.

HB 1070, requiring any budget reduction be reflected in the default budget, is an attempt to

minimize manipulation and ensure the default budget is less than the proposed budget. It was debated and passed, 172-162. HB 1081, modifying the vote to dissolve a village district, passed, 174-162, after a short debate.

HB 1087, requiring that no zoning ordinance require a lot bigger than 10,000 square feet for a single family home, if in water and sewer are provided, started a debate, then was tabled on a voice vote after the first speaker. Later in the day, an attempt to remove it from the table failed, 166-169.

HB 1112, expanding the competitive bidding process for counties to make all counties follow the more detailed law that Hillsborough county used, was debated and killed, 176-163. I supported the bill because it limits the opportunities for corruption and manipulation, and ensures a rational and open process is followed. HB 1119, allowing municipalities to regulate single use shopping bags, was tabled, 300-35.

HB 1172, requiring composting and recycling be available in public housing, went to interim study without comment. HB 1177, requiring single family zones to allow up to 4 residential units (flats, duplexes, triple deckers, townhouses, accessory units) if the area has water and sewer utilities, also started a debate, then was tabled, 167-157; a later motion to remove it from the table failed, 159-176. I supported this bill as it's an effective, small scale way to add inexpensive housing, and most of the areas that have water and sewer used to allow this sort of multi-family housing until the 1960's.

HB 1184, on local revolving funds, was killed as badly written, on a voice vote. HB 1194,



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modifying the procedure to override a local tax cap, was not tabled, 148-181, debated, and passed, 183-146. Current law allows such a cap be overridden by a simple majority vote; this bill changes that to 60%. More than the current seven localities might want a tax cap if it's less likely to be casually overridden.

HB 1219, changing the parking requirements for religious affiliated housing projects, was killed without comment. HB 1223, providing for a vacancy on a school board or budget committee if an elected member misses too many meetings, went to interim study on a voice vote. HB 1268, limiting the scope of city councils' ordinances, had a brief debate before passing, 176-156. HB 1289, on property tax abatements, went to interim study without comment. HB 1307, tweaking the authority of the housing appeals board, passed on a voice vote.

HB 1342, adding an override to municipal tax caps that don't have them, was debated at length and not passed, 157-181, then killed on a voice vote. The opposition was that the only municipality that doesn't have an override in their charter is Nashua, and it was felt that a charter revision, approved by the voters, was a more appropriate solution. HB 1393, allowing school districts to adopt budget caps, was not tabled, 164-178, then passed on a voice vote. HB 1667, revising the various veterans' property tax credits and giving them a uniform definition of "veteran," was debated and passed, 205-127.

HB 1432, prohibiting the use of state funds for new passenger rail, was not tabled, 152-182, debated and passed, 187-144. Enough representatives have learned that passenger rail requires massive subsidies to operate, and almost none of us want to

rely on the MBTA for efficient operation! This will hopefully end discussions of the Manchester-Nashua-Massachusetts rail boondoggle. If we need public transit to Boston, a dedicated bus line on the turnpike and/or I93 (with self-driving buses!) would carry more people with less subsidy. Full disclosure – I take the existing bus service to Logan airport, or when I'm cruising from Boston, or anytime I don't want to bother with a car in downtown Boston.

HB 2022, the state ten year transportation plan, spends \$4.65 billion over ten years, from state revenue and federal funds. The plan was adopted on a voice vote, then we debated removal of one section which transferred Continental Boulevard from the turnpike system to the town of Merrimack. This road is a connector from route 101-A to the turnpike, and is not much used for local traffic, so the representatives from Merrimack were opposed to assuming road maintenance. So we argued about how much that maintenance would cost (with Merrimack assuming over twice the actual costs to the turnpike system), and whether it was a fair trade-off for removing the ramp tolls in Merrimack. The amendment failed, 148-181, and HB 2022 passed on a voice vote. I heard later that Merrimack plans to close off the road rather than maintain it, but I'd bet after the 20,000 or so cars a day that use the connector start using local roads, they'll change their mind!

We moved to special order two bills from Ways & Means to the next order of business, at 5 pm. HB 1097 declares that the state has a sovereign interest in preventing any other state from claiming the right to tax income earned **by** New Hampshire residents **in** New Hampshire, even if it's for an out of state company. This was debated and passed, 251-72. HB 1221 started as a cut to both the BPT



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and BET, but the committee amendment deletes the change to the BET since it's almost \$28 million in lower revenue; the BPT cut is not even \$8 million. The amendment passed, 227-99; I voted against as the BET cut is more useful to small businesses; also the revenue cuts estimated are quite simplistic and don't address increased business due to the tax cuts. After that, we suffered through an extremely dry debate, with both sides throwing out various numbers; we finally passed the bill, 177-141.

HB 1071, requiring wake surfing to stay 250 feet from the shoreline, rather than the current 150 feet, was killed, 171-149, without debate. HB 1227, changing the definition of "prime wetlands" to include narrower connecting areas, was tabled on a voice vote. HB 1317, requiring an annual report on new developments in recreational watercraft, was killed, 201-120, without debate.

HB 1116, allowing multiple accounts to share in renewable energy credits, was tabled, 168-127. HB 1148, prohibiting towns or cities from restricting fuel sources, was not tabled, then debated. This is to prevent an attempt to ban natural gas – or oil heat – or wood stoves, or whatever, in favor of "clean" energy, as several of our more progressive towns have done. The bill passed, 167-142. HB 1250, requiring the PUC consider climate change, was tabled, 168-143.

HB 1258, a housekeeping bill to fix various statutes amended when the department of energy was created, passed without discussion. HB 1270, dissolving the oversight committee for divestiture of energy production, was not tabled, passed on a voice vote, then the Speaker realized that the committee amendment had not been passed! So we voted on the amendment, then passed the bill

again, 173-138.

HB 1328, authorizing a telephone utility ask to be relieved of its "carrier of last resort" obligations, was not tabled, 142-168, then passed, 173-138. HB 1459, creating a mandatory solar panel recycling program, was not tabled, 141-167, then passed, 167-145. HB 1596, increasing the limit for net metering from 1 to 5 MW, was tabled, 167-140, since this change was vetoed last session.

HB 1599, tweaking the credit for new sellers of renewable energy certificates, passed 163-137 without debate. HB 1611, on the rules of the site evaluation committee, was killed without comment. HB 1628, requiring a report on the UNH microgrid project, was tabled, 208-99, with the opposition seemingly interested in having a mandated research project! HB 1629, on the default rate for net metering, passed 163-140, without debate.

HB 1635, on limited energy producers, went to interim study without comment. HB 1645, requiring notification of renewable energy producers that their unclaimed certificates were being swept up to the larger utilities, was killed, 165-139.

All the various bills about utility regulation were largely party line, because the issues are complex and the committee is especially poor at explaining them. So, one decides who to trust...

HB 1284, a study committee on the effects of deportation, was tabled, 172-135. HCR 7, a resolution affirming support for Israel and its decision to locate its capital in Jerusalem, turned into the most intense debate of the three days, despite it being a resolution of no practical



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importance. First, a very young member presented a floor amendment completely replacing the resolution with one supporting Palestine. During the debate on this (while he was claiming unanimous support!) a motion to table failed, 150-155; a motion to indefinitely postpone failed, 144-160; and the amendment failed, 119-185. Two of the more prominent Jewish members of the House, both Republicans, spoke in strong support of the resolution, and it passed 175-107.

At this point (after 9 pm), the leaders of each party moved to suspend the rules and take up all remaining bills next session. This passed on a voice vote, by the necessary 2/3; at least the speaker declared it so and nobody objected!

Saturday, I witnessed a recount of the Epsom school budget. This had passed by one vote, with very low turnout (309-308 – less than 30%) so a recount seemed appropriate. No luck – the voters' intentions were clear. Still, it's troubling that 12 people went to the polls and voted – but skipped the school budget!



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