



Your State House

Concord, New Hampshire



April 8, 2022

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

This week, my committee met to hear our Senate bills. SB 223 allows recovery houses to be exempted from some fire code requirements if they provide 50 square feet per person in a bedroom, rather than 200 sq. ft in the whole house. This may actually be a reduction in capacity, not an increase: a small 3 or 4 bedroom house could allow 10-12 residents at 200 (as long as parking, septic, and other requirements are met) but only 3-4 with the sleeping space limit. We discussed this at some length, learning that this is the national standard for recovery houses and dorm rooms. SB 398, building code and fire code enforcement, actually reconstitutes a moribund committee as the legislative liaison to the building code review board and the fire control board. This is a recommendation from the study I was on this summer, and should smooth future adoptions of code updates.

SB 460 simply updated job titles or pay grades for some unclassified (supervisory) positions, and we confirmed that it didn't mean anyone got an immediate raise, or that the state would spend more money on personnel overall. SB 356, on medical benefits payments by state retirees, also had no fiscal impact: it simply realigned some procedures to agree with federal, so that the state's health plan would be subsidized as a Medicare Advantage plan. If anything, it will save the state from sending certified letters any time someone pays even a day late! All four of these bills were recommended to pass.

SB 397, on the other hand, was a very complex bill that went to subcommittee. It adopts the interstate compact on mental health counseling, similar to

other compacts we've considered, but it also updates the interstate compact on the placement of children! We've been in that compact since 1965, and it needs some updates... we'll be working on that part with the committee on children & family law, since they're a lot more familiar with child placement than my committee!

SB 313, on professional license fees, is more of the coordination and clean-up necessary after we consolidated the licensing boards into the Office of Professional Licensure & Certification. It also includes a study committee on funding licensure, which I hope to consolidate with a broader study committee of OPLC operations.

SB 363, buying service credit for some Group II members, for those personnel who were employed but not vested when the retirement system was changed in 2011, was strongly supported by police, fire, and corrections personnel. Since the bill requires them to pay the full cost of this credit, there is no cost impact to the state, the municipal employers, or the retirement system (except for a modest startup cost.) After some discussion, we voted to recommend this bill.

SB 438, a buy American plan, requires any state funded project costing more than \$1 million to use American-made structural steel and iron. I'm concerned that the only people testifying were those who expect to gain from it, namely the steel fabricators. Nobody from public works or state procurement was present to inform us on the costs to the taxpayers from adopting this policy, or even on what policies they use to trade off material costs versus delivery time, reliability or quality.

SB 443, municipal authority regarding the state building code, was another recommendation from the study committee I served on last summer. It



Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



requires local building code amendments to be sent to the building code review board for review and publishing prior to implementation. The review board cannot disapprove a local amendment, unless it exceeds the municipality's authority by conflicting with the state building code or fire code (and failure to timely act means approval.) I'm working on a clarifying amendment, but we agreed on the policy.



Carol McGuire

Representative Carol McGuire
carol@mcguire4house.com
782-4918