



January 13, 2023

Your State House

Concord, New Hampshire



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

My committee met this week for orientation. This was important since we have five newly elected representatives, plus five who have not served on ED&A previously; they needed an introduction to the topics and agencies we deal with. First, the state retirement system presented their current status and some history, in preparation for the 20 or so bills expected to affect them. Then we had a performance audit of the dental board, which introduced the auditors, some board members, and the OPLC (Office of Professional Licensure and Certification.) The audit revealed a large number of problems, many of which were expected, due to the churning of the licensing statutes. We will be tracking progress on resolving them.

Wednesday my committee heard our first six bills, all commemorating a special event. HB 33, establishing March 2 as polycystic ovary syndrome awareness day, had only testimony from the prime sponsor, who apparently believed that a proclamation from the governor would increase awareness of this condition. We recommended she work through the Board of Medicine, since one problem seemed to be that non-specialist doctors were not aware of the condition. We then voted unanimously to recommend killing the bill.

HB 65 commemorated the first labor strike by women, which was in Dover in 1828. Three sponsors spoke, but we remembered (from last year's bill on this topic) that there was some controversy over whether this was actually the first such strike, as one in Lawrence and another in Rhode Island occurred earlier. This one, at least,

was led by and consisted *entirely* of women, which was not true of the others. After some discussion, we voted unanimously to kill it.

HB 94, establishing October as eczema awareness month, had the sponsor, and more importantly, the constituent family that had requested the bill, testify. They had a heart-wrenching story, but were interested in increasing awareness and funding for research into this disease and treatments for it. The committee is not convinced that a New Hampshire designated day will have any effect on either; most special days get a proclamation from the governor, maybe a press release, and nothing else. Due to the testimony, the vote to kill this bill was 17-2, with the two supporters writing a report for the calendar.

HR 12 was a resolution, not a bill, which meant it wouldn't go to the Senate or the Governor. National Lung Cancer Awareness month only had the sponsor testifying (although some supporters had submitted online testimony) and, again, she had an exaggerated idea of how much awareness is created by a House resolution. The vote to kill it was unanimous.

HB 140, Granny D day, was another perennial, with several people testifying. The fact that the governor has already declared Granny D day this year didn't sway them from wanting to add it to the list of designated days in statute. The vote to kill it was, again, unanimous.

HB 180, renaming Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day, had more testimony than all the others put together! I missed much of it (due to a meeting with the Speaker, scheduled as if this would only take as long as the others...) but it made the papers. The incentives to this bill is a distaste for Columbus, for his personal failings; and a recognition that the "discovery" of America



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was a disaster for the Native Americans. I'm opposed to the change not to honor Italians, but to recognize that after Columbus's voyages, the hemispheres were linked and that changed the world. We did not vote on this bill.

Thursday, we continued with hearings. HB 30 allows a county to exempt the chief administrator from compulsory membership in the retirement system. I was a cosponsor, and testified that if a candidate was not already in the retirement system, a short term towards the end of her career was not very desirable; if the candidate had a previous career in Group II (police, fire, corrections), such a situation was actively bad for them. This happened in Merrimack County: the best candidate for county administrator was the superintendent of the jail, and he wouldn't take the job if he had to be in Group I (and Social Security) for a few years. The county (and two others!) came up with a legal workaround. After some discussion, we voted unanimously to recommend the bill.

HB 183, allowing retired firefighters to work at the fire academy in excess of the statutory limit, was brought in with an amendment to include retired police officers teaching at the police standards & training council. This went to the pension subcommittee since the limit on part time work while collecting a pension is a measure strongly supported by the committee as a way to prevent double dipping and stress on the retirement system.

HB 193, a set of clarifying measures on administration of the retirement system, also had an amendment on job sharing. It also went to subcommittee.

CACR 1, adding a lieutenant governor to the constitution, had some interesting testimony. Most

of the testifiers agreed that we needed a succession plan, and the Senate President (as currently in the Constitution) may not be the best choice for a long term vacancy in the governor's office. Since we've only had short vacancies recently (when the outgoing governor – both Gregg and Hassan – has been elected to the US Senate), it hasn't been a problem. Still, there was no real enthusiasm in the committee for working on a more appropriate plan.

Not a bad start to the session: 10 bills heard, 6 voted on, of 60-odd I'm expecting (they're still being released.)



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