



# Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



January 26, 2024

To my constituents in Allenstown, Dunbarton, Epsom, & Hooksett,

This week, my committee continued with public hearings. HB 1333, forbidding the state from buying or leasing electric vehicles for ten years, was brought by a firefighter who was concerned about battery fires. They burn much hotter and more explosively than other car fires, and are more difficult to put out. It is also harder to get out of an electric car than a regular one (at least when the power is off.) Until fire companies are trained in battery fires, and the risks are better known, he wanted the state to keep from buying these vehicles. HB 1580 banned government (both state and local) procurement of electric vehicles with components created by forced labor – the chief example given was by child laborers. Nobody wants to encourage this, but cobalt, for one, has multiple uses other than electric cars. The bill would also cause government agencies to spend a lot of time and effort investigating these components and documenting that the vehicles they purchased were not produced by forced labor. We voted unanimously to recommend killing HB 1580, at least partly because we disapproved of using the government procurement process in this manner. After some discussion, we voted to recommend interim study for HB 1333 – ten years might be too long for a ban, and the emergency responders need to work out how to handle fires in these vehicles anyway since the government is not the only vehicle purchaser.

HB 1466, providing disaster relief funding to municipalities, was presented by the sponsor, whose small town has suffered repeated natural disasters that destroyed roads and bridges. The current process is lengthy, requires a special town meeting to authorize a loan, and has no way to

quickly get some funds into use. The bill creates a special fund and just *gives* the money to the town, on request; it's going to subcommittee to examine the grant process and see why the agency thinks it needs 5 employees to manage the process.

HB 1324 defines and authorizes green burials and natural organic reduction of human remains. The sponsors were enthusiastic about these options, but the funeral directors and cemetery owners (including a green cemetery!) were concerned about what to do with the final remains. The bill refers to them as “soil” but doesn't address the issues of soil regulation by the US Department of Agriculture (human remains and compost – other possible terms for the residue – are regulated by different federal agencies in different ways!) This bill also went to subcommittee.

HB 1075 abolishes daylight saving time by ending the twice-weekly time change and leaving the state on standard time. This time, the testimony was not on the dangers of clock changes – it seems everyone gets the point – but on the benefits of being on standard time. HB 1679 changes the state to Atlantic time, which is the same effect as being on daylight saving time year-round. It is a more complex bill because it needs to comply with federal regulations on changing time zones (staying on standard time is already legal.) I can see us devolving as Congress did, into agreeing to get rid of changes but splitting on standard vs daylight saving time.

HB 1057 provides a provisional license for emergency medical services technicians who have completed training and passed the qualifying exam, but are waiting for the results of the criminal background check. Other health care professions have conditional licenses that accomplish the same thing, and we heard both that EMTs rarely fail their



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background check and that they are closely supervised when they start, since they need practice in the New Hampshire protocols. This bill was unanimously recommended to pass, as was HB 1233, on animal chiropractors. As we heard last year, both the veterinary board and the board of chiropractors have tried to hassle animal chiropractors, so that it is almost an underground profession. This bill simply defines the profession and keeps both boards out.

HB 1272, on license reciprocity, removes the requirement that the requirement be “substantially similar” for a license to be granted by endorsement. We heard that the current requirement is more complex than one might think, as different states use different titles for the same profession. For example, New Hampshire has barbers – and *master* barbers, with more training and a greater scope of practice (mustache coloring, for one; I’m not sure of the rest.) So in determining the correct license for a “barber” from another state, the agency needs to review the scope of practice to see which category is “similar,” and job titles in mental health practice and alcohol and drug counseling vary wildly between regulating agencies... So, off to subcommittee to consider these issues and the (few) cases where some New Hampshire specific knowledge is required (land surveyors and real estate that I know about.)

Finally, we heard HB 1676, establishing a sunset commission to review occupational licensing, which brought out a large number of licensees opposed to the idea of examining the requirements for their profession. Many were concerned that the bill mandated repeal of their boards (and licenses), but it only calls for a review and evaluation. As a cosponsor, I testified that a structured review of our laws and rules in specific areas is necessary every now and then: we have a “committee on

committees” every now and then, the pension system has a commission meet every decade, and Dan is on a committee reviewing all dedicated funds on a five year cycle; reviewing licensing requirements makes sense to me. This bill also went to subcommittee, planning, at least, to sunset the sunset commission.



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