



# Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



May 31, 2024

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

This week, the House met to consider Senate messages on the bills where we had passed different versions. First, we considered Senate amendments to House bills. In all cases, committee chairs moved to concur (or not) and explained Senate changes. Concur sends the bill to the Governor, non-concur kills it immediately.

HB 185, on the determination of parental rights, was debated over how to balance the rights of parents versus children. By 191-171 we voted that approximately equal parenting time was in the best interest of the child, unless proven otherwise. Later this day, we did not reconsider this vote, 178-191.

HB 1006, creating a way for family court to enforce parenting plans, was amended to only consider substantial violations, and concurred on a voice vote. HB 1189, criteria for reporting child support delinquencies to federal agencies, had been amended to only report delinquencies that exceeded the federal threshold. This was debated on whether it could be implemented and whether it violated federal rules, thus jeopardizing federal funding. The motion to concur failed, 181-188, and non-concur passed, 185-183. Later in the day, a representative asked for reconsideration, claiming she pushed the wrong button; this failed, 180-188.

HB 1588, clarifying court jurisdiction over persons in special education (in this case, those who did not graduate from high school but were aging out of the program), was explained as the Senate using the education trust fund rather than the general fund to implement the bill. We concurred on a voice vote.

HB 279, increasing the penalty for overserving alcohol, was agreed on a voice vote when the chair stated the change was to add a minor penalty. HB 645, establishing decentralized autonomous organizations as legal entities, accommodated a minor request from the attorney general, which we accepted after the chair assured us that **both** individuals who really understood this issue were happy with it! (I know I'm not one of them, nor is anyone sitting near me.)

HB 1018, about liquor licenses and land in current use, had been amended to include SB 504, which allowed landowners to post their land in such a way that law enforcement could investigate illegal border crossings, was debated and not concurred, 178-190, not non-concurred, 180-190, then sent to committee of conference on a voice vote.

HB 1129, about proxy votes in condominium associations, and HB 1144, defining what information on sewage systems needed to be disclosed when selling property, both passed without comment. HB 1236, on a pilot for a recruitment and retention policy in HHS plus eligibility for "in and out medical assistance," was not concurred, 175-194, and sent to committee of conference on a voice vote, all without debate.

HB 1320, on flood risk disclosure, and HB 1559, repealing the chapter on cash dispensing machines (it has been overtaken by changes in banking policy) and creating special disability pensions for public safety employees who are victims of attacks, both passed without debate. HB 1559 included the text on SB 134, from my committee, that the Senate killed because of the added bills.

HB 1633, on the legalization and regulation of cannabis, was debated at length, with nearly all the speakers strongly in favor of the House version.



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Concur failed, 117-252, non-concur failed, 173-196, and requesting a committee of conference finally passed, 261-108. I'm not too optimistic about the results of the conference, but we'll see.

HB 1649, banning some products with PFAS, passed, 340-28, without debate.

HB 135, banning most no-knock warrants, passed on a voice vote, as did HB 593, a study committee on asset forfeiture, and HB 596, prohibiting racial profiling in law enforcement and sentencing. HB 653, adding more duties to the interbranch criminal and juvenile justice council, was explained that the Senate added more juveniles to the council before it passed quietly.

HB 1186, forbidding gun-based activity codes for credit card transactions, was debated as to its purpose, with supporters claiming privacy concerns and the opponents giving gun control talking points. We concurred, 190-179.

HB 1014, on instruction in civics and requiring municipalities and schools to use the proper name of holidays, was an attempt to stop the local co-option of Columbus Day for Indigenous Peoples' Day. We concurred, 183-171. HB 1107, on curriculum frameworks, was approved without debate, as was HB 1165, on school facilities. HB 1305, freedom of speech at public universities, was agreed, 201-160, without discussion.

HB 1579, on merging SAUs, was agreed as the chair explained the Senate amendment was simply an extension of time to accomplish it. HB 1655, giving the commissioner of education the authority to set, in rules, fees for criminal background checks, also passed without comment.

HB 115, changing the date of the primary election

to late June, was debated, not concurred, 159-202, and non-concur passed on a voice vote. I was not convinced by the opponents who insisted, with great heat, that we'd be campaigning non stop, first January to March for town offices, then March (new filing period) to November for state representative. I haven't seen much energetic campaigning for town offices – and intense contested primary elections are fairly rare.

HB 243, requiring votes be tabulated in public, passed without debate. It, and the next three bills, had language tweaks imposed by the Senate that didn't change the intent. HB 1098, on ballots delivered to elder care facilities, passed, 182-181. Both HB 1126, candidate requests for absentee ballot information, and HB 1150, political advertising rates, passed without comment. The change to HB 1310, on meetings of supervisors of the checklist, was explained as deleting the no-notice provision for continued meetings, and it passed, 183-180.

HB 494, renaming a dedicated fund, only had an effective date change and passed quietly. HB 1221, including landfills in the definition of regional impact, was amended to delete the Secretary of State's involvement, and concurred without debate, as was HB 1628, which had been amended to cover 100% of pet neuter or spay charges for the indigent, rather than the current 80%.

I spoke for concurrence on 15 bills from my committee, and most passed without comment. HB 274, on administrative rulemaking, had a better definition of "stakeholder" than I'd been able to come up with; HB 1057, provisional licenses for EMT had some explicit, reasonable precautions for supervision while the provisional license was in effect. HB 1059, updating the state building code, included amendments approved by the building code review board through May. This bill was



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agreed, 319-43. HB 1095, on licensing board administration, explicitly requires electricians to have some classroom time, and simplifies the MLADAC application procedure.

HB 1222, physician assistants scope of practice, had more significant changes: a new study committee, new effective date, and, rather than deleting the collaboration agreement, a PA would need a waiver from the Board of Medicine and over 8,000 hours of collaborative practice to practice independently. This was not tabled, 44-317, debated, and passed, 325-36.

HB 1307, supplemental allowance for disability retirees, had a format fix and slipped the payment from FY 24 to FY 25 (next month.) HB 1328, defining public safety as essential services, had some wording changes to clarify that volunteers, as well as employees, are included. HB 1352, firefighter protective gear, had minor tweaks to language and a simplified definition of what's banned. HB 1385, veteran's licensing acceleration, changed a chapter heading.

HB 1410, on various licensing boards, had the content of SB 134, optometrists' scope of practice, included. This version included the committee amendment and the floor amendment to make it a positive change, defining what they could do, not what they couldn't. I started out hopeful, but an opponent moved to table the bill, and that passed, 192-170.

HB 1413, on mental health supervision requirements, added a study committee on barriers to access, and the contradictory and misinterpreted laws we found while working on this bill made me realize that it might be a good idea! HB 1456, appointments to the board of tax and land appeals, went back to five year terms – which we'd

discussed, but nobody had the initiative to actually implement. HB 1474, on the commission on Native American affairs, deleted *everything* except the quorum fix, so the commission could meet and settle these issues among themselves. HB 1526, conditional license for foreign veterinarians, simply clarified that they would work under the *direct* supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

Finally, HB 1647, GII pensions, had been trimmed by the Senate to apply to fewer people and only after longer service. It did cost only half as much, and after some discussion with members of Finance, I decided this was all we were going to get this year and recommended concurrence. That passed on a voice vote (and I know we'll see this topic again next year!)

HB 1323, furnishing copies of the constitution, was simply delayed to the next fiscal year.

HB 322, creating a study committee on the board of medicine, was amended to add a one-time payment to nursing homes, and passed, 218-106. HB 1028, which had started as redefining mental illness so as not to include developmental or intellectual disability, had been turned into a study commission on crisis intervention for those with these disabilities, and passed without comment.

HB 1303, on the estate of Tekeste Berhanu, simply split his estate between the same three organizations chosen by the house, but with a different ratio. HB 1568, on Medicaid paying for ambulance services other than transport, had fleshed out the House position more fully and was agreed without debate.

HB 1607, on expanded safe haven provisions, was debated heatedly about the exclusionary principle, which forbids prosecuting the parents with evidence from the abandonment. One side was





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adamant that the safe haven should not excuse parents for abuse or neglect; the other, that the baby was safer away from its (probably abusive or neglectful) parents than held to prevent prosecution. I was convinced by the later argument, and the bill was concurred, 185-174.

HB 1609, on the commission on primary care workforce, had one member of the commission changed; HB 1712, renewing the committee to study treatment options for patients with chronic pain, was extended further. Both were agreed on voice votes.

HB 1220, deleting racial and education data from the marriage license application, and the expectation of privacy: the Senate removed the secretary of state from the process, and the bill passed on a voice vote. HB 1245, on release of records for a person appointed a guardian and patient access to medical records, was debated on whether or not an patient's attorney should have access to medical records, and the cost of compliance, before we agreed, 182-175. HB 1432, prohibiting some uses of deepfakes, was agreed without comment, as was HB 1589, establishing a veteran's treatment court.

HB 1080, on the legislative youth advisory council, passed without discussion. HB 1388, on ethical standards for legislators, was debated on whether it would prohibit taking advantage of our various knowledge and experience, and passed, 255-92.

HB 2002, on property tax abatements; HB 1055, on property tax exemptions for charities; and HB 1187, on building or facility improvements, all passed quietly.

HB 1103, on penalties of the shoreland protection

act, had a clarifying amendment; HB 1121, wetlands permit exemptions after a natural disaster, had been modified to allow mechanical devices as long as they did not enter the water; and HB 1554, on culvert maintenance and cutting vegetation in public waters, all passed without comment.

HB 609, on the site evaluation committee; HB 1078, having the department of safety generate maps of radio systems; HB 1431, utility requirements for integrated distribution planning; HB 1465, studies of nuclear energy and renaming the office of offshore wind to the office of offshore wind industry development and energy innovation; and HB 1499, study committees on clean energy conservation and the child protection act, all passed quietly.

HB 1600, on participation in net metering, had been converted to a study committee, and the Senate wanted a committee of conference to actually do something with the bill. So, after a brief debate, it was not concurred, 169-174, and a committee of conference was requested by a voice vote. HB 1697, on forest carbon credit programs, was changed to have the study committee report in both 2024 and 2025, and passed by acclamation.

HB 1567, zoning for child care uses, was amended to allow operating during an appeal and passed on a voice vote.

HB 1065, on sprinkler requirements in residential buildings, was amended to allow the fire marshal more discretion and passed. HB 1168, a study committee on housing for people with disabilities, had a minor amendment before passing quietly.

HB 1215, on development approvals and appeals, had been amended to allow the town of Hampton to discontinue a road, so that it could lease it to a developer. This was debated, and I agreed with the



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opponents that this was eminent domain under a different name; concurrence failed, 172-180, and a committee of conference passed on a voice vote.

HB 1355, recruitment and retention programs for the National Guard and the department of transportation, passed quietly.

HB 1122, lights on motor vehicles, had a clarifying amendment and passed on a voice vote, as did HB 1158, on vessel registration, and HB 1550, allowing municipalities to lower speed limits seasonally.

HB 1525, on how long credits could be accumulated against business taxes, had an extension for the Senate that was agreed on a voice vote. HB 1549, buy-in amounts, also passed without comment. HB 1613, a trust fund for contamination settlements, had a 10% fee eliminated, so we approved.

HB 1311, on school library collections, was voted to non-concur, as a poorly written bill on a position that had narrowly passed the House on a different bill.

HB 476, on recount procedures, had included authority for a second recount when the results changed, but the Senate removed that, gutting the bill. We voted to non-concur. HB 1596, disclosure of deceptive artificial intelligence in political advertisement, was moved non-concur by the committee chair, who claimed legal experts disagreed about the interpretation of the bill. This was debated and failed, 166-184, and a committee of conference approved, 182-168.

CACR 13, prohibiting slavery, had been changed by the Senate to the federal language, which had already failed in the House, 168-201, when we first

considered this amendment. The motion to non-concur passed without debate.

The House refused to agree to a committee of conference on four Senate bills.

SB 249, another bail reform bill – there's already a conference on a different bill, same theme. SB 460, on drones – no debate, no discussion, and I can't see the difference in the bills! SB 504 – yet another bail reform bill, which didn't pass the House. This bill was killed, 176-166. SB 605, another ethics bill, was no longer needed since we passed HB 1388.

Next week all the committees of conference will meet, then on June 13 we will meet to vote on the recommendations. After that, the only legislative activity is working on interim study bills, and meeting on the governor's vetoes. And, of course, running for reelection!



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