



Your State House Concord, New Hampshire



August 30, 2024

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

I hope everyone had a pleasant summer – it was a treat to meet some of you at Old Home Day (Epsom, Dunbarton, and Allenstown so far.)

September 10 is the state primary election, and there are more contested races than usual. These include for governor and congressional district 2 (both parties); Republicans for congressional district 1 and executive council in district 4; and a number of county offices. Fortunately, none of the state representative or senators here are facing a contest; in fact, in my district (Merrimack 27) there is only one Democrat signed up for the two seats, and Dan has no opponent signed up in Epsom (Merrimack 14). If you are taking a Democrat ballot in either district, we'd both appreciate your writing us in to fill the empty slot.

This year, I sponsored eight bills and co-sponsored 25 more. Honestly, I did very little work on the co-sponsored bills, except for the ones that went through my committee. Of my prime bills, two have been signed into law, one is in interim study in my committee, four were killed, and the final one was vetoed!

The two signed into law were the updates to the state building code, HB 1059, and the building code process, HB1387. In addition, two of my cosponsored bills on building codes have become law: SB 599, updating the state fire code, and SB 437, revising the process for local amendments to the state building codes. I worked with the Building Code Review board and the state Fire Marshall on all of these bills, and these bills all work together.

HB 1271, which combined a number of licensing boards and made a number of them advisory, is in interim study in my committee. Some of these changes were considered non-controversial by my committee, so we placed them in a non-germane amendment to SB 318, which had started as a duplicate of HB 1190, adopting the social work compact. The social work compact has become law; SB 318, however, was vetoed over the manufactured housing installation standards board becoming advisory. I expect further legislation on all of these.

HB 344, my bill legalizing possession and home growing of cannabis, was killed in the House in favor of the legalize and regulate bill, HB 1633. That was finally laid on the table because of House opposition to the Senate version, and will die there.

HB 1285 and HB 1286, each of which merged regulatory boards, were recommended to be killed by my committee. These had started as the governor's initiative in HB 2 last year, but when I put in these bills this year, there was no support from anyone and no real explanation of the need for the merger. The committee listened to the professionals and decided the board mergers were not appropriate.

Finally, HB 1451, which defined *mandatory* overtime as base pay for the purpose of applying to pensions, passed the House but was killed in the Senate. I'm not sure why, except that the costs were unknown and possibly high.

HB 1622, a technical update to the administrative rulemaking process, was vetoed. This was a followup to HB 274 (I cosponsored and it went through my committee.) HB 274 required an agency to notify more people of a rulemaking procedure, including “known stakeholders.” That



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was considered too vague, so the Senate clarified it to “past participants in similar rulemaking proceedings.” Seems clear to me; I know when we have a bill on nurse licensing, say, I expect the hospital association and the county nursing homes (and sometimes other nurse employers) to show up. The governor thought this requirement was too burdensome for the agencies, and he was concerned that they might have to pay legal fees for a plaintiff whose case overturned their rule – after they adopted it over a final objection by the legislative committee on rules! Very rare occurrence – I can remember only one case where a rule was adopted after a final objection in my 14 years on the administrative rules committee. So, HB 274 was vetoed, and HB 1622, which was mostly minor tweaks to the process – requested by the staff – also was vetoed. In this case, the veto message mentioned the legal fees again – but HB 1622 made payment optional rather than mandatory. So, a bunch of us from the rules committee are going to work on overturning these vetoes. Since both bills passed the House and the Senate on the consent calendar – voice votes and no debate – we’ll have to inform the rest of the legislature about these bills. Other than the minor procedural changes, the objectionable (to the governor) part of both bills is an attempt to keep the agencies accountable when they make administrative rules.

Incumbents can file new bills September 3-13 this year; everyone who gets elected will have another, longer, filing period in November. I plan to refile some of the advisory board conversions, and some other statutory cleanup that is requested by the licensing staff. And HB 1622, if the veto is not overridden!



Carol McGuire

Representative Carol McGuire
carol@mcguire4house.com
(603) 782-4918