

NH Legislature This Week—February 12, 2018  
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### Quotes of the Week

“Anything that's made an impact in the world, things change through conversations and it usually takes more than one.” **Rep. Eric Schleien** (R-Hudson), primary sponsor of HB587, which would prohibit “conversion therapy” to attempt to change a person's sexual orientation on minors.

“This bill encourages good counseling and therapy. What it prohibits is what every reputable professional physical and mental health care organization around the world says is damaging to the well-being of all children and teenagers: conversion therapy” **Rep. Ed Butler** (D-Hart's Location) a sponsor of HB587.

### House and Senate to meet on Thursday

The House session last Wednesday was canceled due to snow, but the House still met on Thursday and voted on many of the bills that we were watching for that session. Two of the bills – a resolution on hate crimes and a bill to reduce financial incentives for renewable energy were held off until this week. This week, the House and Senate will be meeting on Thursday at 10am to hear Governor Sununu's State of the State address. The House will then go back into session at 11:30 to continue voting on legislation.

### Committee reports available online

The legislature creates many committees that study specific issues and creates reports of their findings which inform future legislation. Have you ever been curious to see what the legislature is studying or what their findings are? You can find reports that have been finished online here: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/>.

### Conversion therapy ban

For many years now there have been efforts by religious and socially conservative organizations to attempt to change gay people into non-gay people through various forms of “therapy”. Often these programs exploit people who are emotionally vulnerable and make any underlying problems worse. This is particularly true when minors are involved who may be forced into “therapy” by disapproving parents. So called “conversion therapy” is universally opposed by all major health and mental health organizations, such as the American Medical Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the World Psychiatric Association. Currently, eight states ban conversion therapy on minors and New Hampshire looks to be joining that list. HB587 would ban conversion therapy on minors. The bill had been defeated in the House by a single vote, 166-165. However, last week the House reconsidered its vote and instead passed the bill 179-171. The bill now goes to the Senate, where it is expected to pass and then to Governor Sununu, who appears to be in

favor of signing it into law.

### **Transgender civil right bill hearing to be continued this week**

A couple of weeks ago, a large crowd of supporters attended the hearing to support HB1319, which would add "gender identity" to NH's civil rights laws. This would make it illegal to discriminate against transgendered people in employment, housing and public accommodations. The crowd was large enough that the hearing had to be moved to Representatives Hall. By the end of the day, there were still people waiting to testify and so the committee has decided to hold a continuation of the public hearing to ensure that all constituents can be heard. The hearing will continue on Tuesday at 10am in Representatives Hall. Please attend if you can and wear green.

### **Family and Medical leave insurance program**

The House has given tentative approval of HB628, which would create an insurance like pool to provide pay for employees taking Family and Medical Leave. The bill was narrowly approved 186-164, but will come back for a second vote of the House after the Finance Committee has a chance to look at the bill and make a recommendation. **Rep. Gargasz** voted in favor of the bill. **Rep. Belanger and Lewicke** voted against the bill. **Rep. Ammon and Carr** had excused absences for the day.

### **Battle of the hate crime resolutions**

When a coalition of Democrats and Republicans presented a strongly worded and specific resolution in opposition to hate crimes, some Republicans responded with a very short and generic resolution opposing hate crimes in general without any specific mentions of instances or groups targeted. This short version was passed by the House last week as part of the consent calendar. This means that there was no discussion of the resolution – it was simply buried in a lengthy list of bills that were all passed by a quick voice vote in batch. The original resolution has been scheduled for debate this week. Count on opponents of the resolution to insist that the legislature has already issued a resolution and therefore there is no need for this one. It should make for an interesting debate when the House is convened on Thursday.

### **House refuses to restore partial funding for retirement**

Town and school budgets have been struggling for the past few years in part because of reduced state support (especially for schools) and also because the towns and schools are now required to put a lot more money into the state retirement system, which had been deliberately underfunded for many, many years. As part of the state cutbacks, the state stopped contributing to the state retirement system for town and school district employees. Last year, HB413 was introduced to have the state pay up to 15% of these retirement costs for teachers, police and firefighters– a fraction of what the state used to contribute. This bill was defeated in early January on a vote of 172-166. Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargasz and Lewicke all voted against the bill. Last week, an effort was

made to reconsider the bill along with a proposal that the bill would not take effect until the next budget cycle. The House rejected the motion to reconsider 170-171. Rep. Belanger, Gargas and Lewicke voted against the motion. Rep. Ammon and Carr had excused absences for the day.

**Last week, the House voted on the following bills:**

HB1341 would declare that gender reassignment surgery on a minor is child abuse, along with physical, mental and sexual abuse. This could lead to the removal of the minor from their home and criminal charges against the parents, guardians and doctors. **Rep. Dave Testerman** (R-Franklin) is the primary (and only) sponsor. He is married to Karen Testerman, who was the head of Cornerstone Policy Research, a socially conservative NH organization that largely focused on opposition to LGBT causes. The House defeated the bill on a voice vote.

HJR5 is a resolution in opposition to "hate, bigotry, and violence in all their forms." The full resolution reads "Whereas extremists in our society have openly espoused hate and bigotry and at least one group has expressed a desire to achieve their ends through violence; and Whereas hate, bigotry, and violence have no place in our state and nation and are an affront to American values; now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened; that the Senate and the House of Representatives reject hate, bigotry, and violence in all their forms, and call on all Americans to unite against hate, bigotry, and violence and strive each day to live up to the principle that all people are created equal." The House passed the resolution on a voice vote. Note, however, that the more specific resolution (HCR13) was moved to next week for consideration.

HB628 would create a state-wide insurance-pool for participants to draw from when on federal Family and Medical Leave Act. The final version of the bill uses an opt-out version that supporters are concerned will make the program unsustainable. This bill was passed by House earlier this year and then sent to the Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee for further review. The House passed the bill 186-164, but it now goes to the House Finance Committee and will come back to the full House for a second vote before it can move on to the Senate. **Rep. Gargas** voted in favor of the bill. **Rep. Belanger and Lewicke** voted against the bill. **Rep. Ammon and Carr** had excused absences for the day.

HB1793 would implement a single payer health care system in New Hampshire. The House defeated the bill on a voice vote.

HB1811 would extend the New Hampshire health protection program, which lowers the cost of health insurance for over 50,000 low income adults. The program is due to expire December 31. The House sent the bill to interim study, effectively defeating it 192-154. **Rep. Gargas** voted in favor of the bill (against sending it to study). **Rep. Belanger and Lewicke** voted against the bill (in favor of sending it to study). **Rep. Ammon and Carr** had excused absences for the day.

HB1763 would create a new Road Usage Fee for fuel efficient vehicles that would be

added to the annual permit fees. The bill would tax vehicles that achieve better than 20mpg efficiency with more efficient cars paying higher taxes. The intent is to ensure that all vehicles, on average, pay the same state taxes as a 20 mpg vehicle pays in gas taxes. The additional funds would support highway maintenance. The House passed the bill 194-132. **Rep. Gargasz** voted in favor of the bill. **Rep. Belanger and Lewicke** voted against the bill. **Rep. Ammon and Carr** had excused absences for the day. HB587 would prohibit "conversion therapy" to change a person's sexual orientation on minors. The House passed the bill 179-171. **Rep. Belanger and Gargasz** voted in favor of the bill. **Rep. Lewicke** voted against the bill. **Rep. Ammon and Carr** had excused absences for the day, but had voted against the bill when it was first defeated.

**This week, the House will vote on the following bills:**

HCR13 is a detailed, bipartisan resolution condemning "hate crime and any other form of conduct that constitutes racism, religious or ethnic bias, discrimination based on age, marriage, familial status, sexuality or gender discrimination, incitement to violence, or animus contrary to law in the state of New Hampshire." The bill specifically cites statistics and incidents against Muslims, Jews, African Americans, transgendered people, and others. The bill specifically calls on law enforcement officials to "expeditiously investigate all credible reports" and "to hold the perpetrators ... accountable and bring the perpetrators to justice". The resolution is sponsored by a broad, bipartisan range of legislators. The House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee recommends that the resolution be passed 13-7.

HB114 would reduce the financial incentives that are aimed at achieving 15% renewable energy by 2025 and would lower the goal to just 6% renewable energy. The House Science, Technology and Energy Committee recommends that the bill be passed 11-10.

**This week, the Senate will vote on the following bills:**

SB554 would raise the minimum wage from \$7.50 per hour to \$12.00 per hour incrementally by 2023, but would set the minimum to higher levels if the employer does not offer an employer-sponsored health care plan, with the minimum wage rising to \$15.00 per hour. The Senate Commerce Committee recommends that the bill be defeated 3-2.

SB362 would require all **candidates for President and Vice President** to disclose federal tax returns. The Senate Election Law and Internal Affairs Committee recommends that the bill be defeated 3-2.

SB545 would raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21. **Rep. Gargasz** is a cosponsor. The Senate Health and Human Services Committee recommends that the bill be passed 3-2.

**House Hearings for this coming week:**

**House Judiciary Committee (Representatives Hall or LOB room 208 depending on the bill)**

HB1319 would prohibit discrimination based on gender identity in employment, housing, and public accommodations. The bill adds "gender identity" to the existing list of categories in which discrimination is prohibited. The bill is sponsored by **Rep. Ed Butler** (D-Hart's Location), **Rep. Brian Stone** (R-Northwood), **Rep. John Fothergill** (R-Colebrook), **Rep. Yvonne Dean-Bailey** (R-Northwood), **Rep. Erin Hennessey** (R-Littleton), **Rep. Karel Crawford** (R-Center Harbor), **Rep. Philip Bean** (R-Hampton), **Rep. Caroline Gargasz** (R-Hollis), **Rep. Charles McMahon** (R-Windham), **Rep. Stephen Darrow** (R-Grafton), **Sen. Jeb Bradley** (R-Wolfeboro), **Sen. Dan Innis** (R-New Castle), **Sen. John Reagan** (R-Deerfield), **Sen. Jeff Woodburn** (D-Whitefield), and **Sen. Martha Fuller Clark** (D-Portsmouth). Tuesday 10:00am in Representatives Hall.

HB1721 would virtually prohibit all pregnancy terminations. The bill is sponsored by **Rep. Kurt Wuelper** (R-Strafford), **Rep. Mark Pearson** (R-Hampstead), **Rep. Bill Nelson** (R-Brookfield), **Rep. Dan Itse** (R-Fremont), **Rep. Jeanine Notter** (R-Merrimack), **Rep. Al Baldasaro** (R-Londonderry), **Rep. Duane Brown** (R-Wentworth), and **Rep. Carl Seidel** (R-Nashua). Seven men and one woman sounds about right. This is a continuation of the hearing. Wednesday 10:00am in LOB room 208.

#### **House Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services Committee (LOB room 307)**

HB1762 would repeal a host of fair labor laws. Among the changes this bill would make are removing rulemaking authority from the Department of Labor regarding child labor and wages; makes is very difficult for the Department of Labor to fine businesses that file false paperwork; repeals the requirement of businesses to have a written safety plan; prevents the Department of Labor from conducting random audits or inspections; repealing requirement that labor laws be posted in a conspicuous place at work; and many more repeals. Wednesday 11:00am.

#### **House Ways and Means Committee (LOB room 210)**

HB656 would legalize possession of up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an ounce of marijuana and possession of up to 6 plants. Tuesday 10:00am.

#### **Where to find more information**

The New Hampshire legislature web site is [www.gencourt.state.nh.us](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us). Here, you can find the full text of all bills, find the full list of sponsors of bills and see more detailed status. If you have questions about how to use the state website, we would be glad to help. Just email us at [brooklinedemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinedemocrats@gmail.com).

#### **Watch and listen to House and Senate sessions live and archived**

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/media/default.htm>

#### **Terms and Abbreviations**

**ITL** means "**Inexpedient To Legislate**". If the full House or full Senate votes to ITL a

bill, then the bill is defeated.

**OTP** means "**Ought to Pass**" meaning that a committee is recommending that a bill be passed.

**Consent Calendar:** If a bill receives a unanimous recommendation from a committee, the committee may place the bill on the Consent Calendar. When full House meets, the first vote taken is to approve all recommendations on all bills in the consent calendar. This allows the House to quickly dispense with non-controversial bills and move on to topics that need discussion. If any legislator requests that a bill be removed from the consent calendar, then it will be removed and it will be brought up for discussion and a vote along with the other non-consent calendar bills.

**Resolutions:** Sometimes the House, the Senate or both will pass resolutions. These are just public statements of opinion or interest, but they have no legal standing. It is similar to issuing a press release. HCR is a House resolution. HJR is a joint resolution (both House and Senate) that originates in the House.

**LOB** refers to the **Legislative Office Building**, which is immediately behind the statehouse. Most committee hearings are held in this building.

**Reps Hall** refers to **Representatives Hall** in the Statehouse where the House of Representatives meetings. This room is used for hearings that are expected to be very large.

**"Retained"** means that a Committee has voted to keep a bill until next year. Next year, any bills that have been retained must be sent to the full House/Senate for a vote. Any bill that does not get retained must be sent to the full House/Senate for vote by Crossover or the end of the session.

**"Crossover"** is March 31st. The House will vote on all bills introduced in the House by this date except for bills that have been retained until next year. Similarly, the Senate will vote on all bills introduced into the Senate by this date except for bills that are being retained until next year.

**"Tabled"**: The full House or full Senate can "table" a bill which means that the bill is kept in "limbo" without being passed or defeated. For tabled bill to be brought back up for a vote again (to pass it) requires a 2/3 majority. If the bill has not been passed when the legislature adjourns at the end of the year, it is defeated. Tabling a bill usually happens when the legislature wants to defeat a bill but doesn't want to directly oppose it. It can also sometimes happen if there are not enough votes to pass, but leadership hopes to be able to come up with enough votes later—but this then requires a 2/3 majority.

### **A brief guide to how legislation becomes law**

Bills introduced in the House:

1. The bill is assigned to a committee and the committee holds a public hearing.
2. The committee either retains the bill or votes to recommend that the bill be passed (OTP), changed (OTPA), or defeated (ITL).
3. Except for retained bills, all other bills go to the full House which can pass, defeat, change a bill or send it to a second committee.

4. If sent to a second committee, the committee must then retain or recommend to pass, change or defeat the bill. It then goes back to the full House for a second vote.
5. If passed by the House, the bill goes to the Senate
6. The bill is assigned to a Senate committee which then holds a public hearing
7. The Senate committee either retains the bill or votes to recommend that the bill be passed (OTP), changed (OTPA), or defeated (ITL).
8. Except for retained bills, all other bills go to the full Senate which can pass, defeat, change a bill or send it to a second committee.
9. If sent to a second committee, the committee must then retain or recommend to pass, change or defeat the bill. It then goes back to the full Senate for a second vote.
10. If passed by the Senate, the bill goes to the Governor who may sign the bill into law or veto it.
11. If the Governor vetoes the bill, it goes back to the House
12. If 2/3 of the House votes to override the veto then the bill goes back to the Senate
13. If 2/3 of the Senate votes to override the veto then the bill becomes law.

For Senate bills, the process is the same except that it goes through the Senate before it goes to the House.

For Constitutional Amendments (CACRs) the process is slightly different.

CACRs introduced in the House:

1. Assigned to a committee and the committee holds a public hearing.
2. The committee votes to recommend that the CACR be passed, changed, killed or sent to study
3. Regardless of the committee recommendation, all CACRs go to the full House which can pass, kill or change a bill or send it to study. Passing a CACR requires 60% of the House members present to vote in favor.
4. If passed by the House, the bill goes to the Senate
5. Assigned to a Senate committee which then holds a public hearing
6. The Senate committee votes to recommend that the bill be passed, changed, killed or sent to study
7. Regardless of the committee recommendation, all bills go to the full Senate which can pass, kill or change a bill or send it to study. Passing a CACR requires 60% of the Senate members present to vote in favor.
8. If passed by the Senate, the CACR will put on the ballot at the next election (November 2012). If 2/3 of the voters vote in favor of it, then it becomes part of the NH Constitution.

**Where to Send Letters to the Editor:**

Nashua Telegraph

[letters@nashuatelegraph.com](mailto:letters@nashuatelegraph.com)

Hollis Brookline Journal

[cabnews@cabinet.com](mailto:cabnews@cabinet.com)

The Journal welcomes letters from its readers that are exclusive to this newspaper. Letters must be 400 words or fewer and are subject to editing either for content or for length. Letters must be received no later than noon on Monday. The Journal does not publish anonymous letters, those written under an assumed name or containing only the writer's initials. Nor does it publish form letters, or those written as part of an orchestrated campaign. Letters must be in good taste and free of libel or personal attacks. Important: Letters must contain the writer's name, home address and day/night telephone numbers and e-mail for confirmation purposes. Only the writer's name and hometown will be published. The deadline for submitting letters is noon on Monday. The Journal is published every Friday.

The Mason Grapevine

Residents of Mason can submit letters to the Mason Grapevine at  
[TheMasonGrapevine@yahoo.com](mailto:TheMasonGrapevine@yahoo.com)

**Hollis, Brookline, Mason Reps:**

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Hollis

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Hollis

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