

NH Legislature This Week—July 3, 2017
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Quotes of the Week(s)

"The Senate Republican's secretive healthcare bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing that would be devastating to the health of Granite Staters. If passed, it would mean less coverage for fewer people at higher costs, all while giving a tax cut to the wealthy. It would significantly cut Medicaid and the program's expansion, hurting our state's response to the opioid epidemic, place an age tax on New Hampshire seniors, and take aim at women's health by defunding Planned Parenthood, which provides vital healthcare services to more than 12,000 Granite State women." **Senator Jeanne Shaheen** (D-NH).

"... we believe that the changes proposed in the BCRA (Republican Senate healthcare bill) will lead to cuts in eligibility, loss of coverage, or significant increases in state taxes. New Hampshire ... remains vigilant against down-shifting of costs onto states that become general fund liabilities... This is not an approach I can support, and I am opposed to the BCRA as currently written." **Governor Chris Sununu**.

"This week, Kris Kobach, the Vice Chair of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity, sent letters to all 50 states, including New Hampshire, requesting a list of all registered New Hampshire voters, the last four digits of their social security numbers, their addresses, dates of birth, political affiliation, their voting history, as well as other information. ... The Commission should not be able to obtain information that is unavailable to any ordinary member of the public. ... New Hampshire law ... only deem public from the checklist a voter's full name, domicile address, mailing address, and party affiliation, if any. The Secretary of State is barred from disclosing to the public any other personal information about voters, including their dates of birth or social security information." Public release from the **New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union** (the NH chapter of the ACLU). Secretary of State Bill Gardner and Governor Chris Sununu plan to provide Trump's commission with any information that they request.

We have reached the end

Welcome to the end of the 2017 session! It's been an ... interesting ... session with the House being unable to kick off the budget process for the first time in living memory, leaving that task up to the Senate. As is unusual for the first year of the term, some controversial bills have been put off until next year, but we did see additional funding for kindergarten through Keno, a repeal of the licensing requirement to carry concealed guns, a civics requirement for high school graduation, and a needle exchange program. We may also see some limited legalization of marijuana if Governor Sununu signs HB640, which is still pending as of this writing.

This will be our last newsletter for this session. We will see you again in January!

Budget passed and signed into law

Governor Sununu has signed the Republican state budget into law. The bill was passed by the Senate on a party line vote. The House vote was almost party line with just 5 Democrats supporting the budget and 11 Republicans opposing it. Rep. Keith Ammon voted against the budget, but voted in favor of the budget trailer bill, which implements the budget.

As of this writing, the Kenogarten bill has been passed by the legislature and is expected to be signed into law by Governor Sununu soon.

The State of Play of this year's Bills

We had thought that, by this time, Governor Sununu would have signed or vetoed all bills that were coming out of the legislature, but it has taken a bit more time than anticipated, so a few of these bills are still in a state of "passed by the legislature and sent to the Governor". Most of these are bills that Governor Sununu has publicly supported (such as Keno funding for full day kindergarten). Below is our final tally of the bills that we feel are of most interest to our readers (out of the many hundreds of bills introduced). Several of these bills are being held over until next year, as you will see in the status.

Included are all recorded votes for **Senator Kevin Avard** (R-Nashua, representing Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Mason, New Ipswich, Rindge, and Wards 1, 2 and 5 in Nashua), **Representative Keith Ammon** (R-New Boston, representing Hollis, Milford, Mont Vernon and New Boston), **Representative Jim Belanger** (R-Hollis), **Representative Carolyn Gargas** (R-Hollis), **Representative John Carr** (R-Brookline, representing Brookline and Mason) and **Representative John Lewicke** (R-Mason, representing Brookline and Mason).

The bills that have been signed into law are denoted with an asterisk (*).

Budget

* HB144 is the state budget.

Status: Signed into law.

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Belanger, Carr, Gargas and Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Ammon voted against.

* HB517 is the budget trailer bill. It makes all changes that are needed to implement the budget

Status: Signed into law.

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargas and Lewicke voted in favor.

Voting Rights and Elections

SB3 places restrictions on voting regarding proving a person's domicile. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Passed by the legislature, sent to the Governor

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Carr, Gargas, and Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Belanger had an excused absence the day of the vote.

SB107 would create an independent redistricting commission.

Status: Defeated in the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted against.

SB111 would create a bipartisan commission to study Russian interference in the election of 2016.

Status: Defeated in the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted against.

SB194 would allow voters to register online.

Status: Defeated in the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted against.

HB203 would establish an independent commission to redraw districts after the next census.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargas and Lewicke voted against.

Welfare

SB7 would restrict eligibility for federal food stamps. Sen. Avard is the primary sponsor.

Status: Passed by the Senate, retained by House committee until next year.

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted in favor.

Unions

SB11 would prohibit collective bargaining agreements that require all employees to join the union that negotiated the contract. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Passed by the Senate, defeated in the House

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargas and Lewicke voted in favor.

HB438 would prohibit the state and local governments from withholding union dues from employees wages.

Status: Retained in committee in the House until next year

Our Reps: N/A

Guns

* SB12 would repeal the licensing requirement for carrying a concealed gun. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Signed into law

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr and Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Gargas had an excused absence for the day.

HB201 would require background checks for gun purchases at gun shows, online, and in classified ads.

Status: Defeated in the House

Our Reps: Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargasz and Lewicke voted against.

Education

SB43 would make it more difficult for schools to evaluate programs to reduce violence and risky behavior. Sen. Avard is the primary sponsor.

Status: Passed by the legislature, sent to the Governor

Our Reps: Sen Avard voted in favor. The House vote was not recorded.

SB44 would prohibit the state from requiring implementation of the common core standards. Sen. Avard is the prime sponsor.

Status: Passed by the legislature, sent to the Governor

Our Reps: Sen Avard voted in favor. The House vote was not recorded.

* SB45 would require high schools to include a course in civics as a graduation requirement.

Status: Signed into law

Our Reps: The votes were not recorded.

SB191 would provide some funding for full day kindergarten by establishing Keno gambling.

Status: Passed by the legislature, sent to the Governor

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Gargasz voted in favor. Rep. Ammon and Lewicke voted against. Rep. Belanger was excused for the day. Rep. Carr did not vote on the bill.

HB129 would repeal the education tax credit which allows public funds to go to private schools.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr and Lewicke voted against. Rep. Gargasz was excused for the day.

HB429 claims to be able to overturn the NH Supreme Court decision on education funding without changing the constitution. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: The House vote was not recorded.

Jobs and Economy

SB83 would raise the minimum wage to \$8.50.

Status: Defeated in the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted against.

HB115 would raise the minimum wage to \$9.25.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargasz and Lewicke voted against.

Drugs

HB640 would decriminalize possession of up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an ounce of marijuana by people over 21. Possession would still be subject to a fine.

Status: Passed by the legislature, sent to the Governor

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, Gargasz and Lewicke voted in favor.

Environment and Gas Pipelines

SB229 would provide protections for residents whose land is taken by eminent domain for a natural gas pipeline. Sen. Avard is the primary sponsor. Rep. Lewicke and Carr are sponsors.

Status: Passed by the Senate, but defeated in the House without a single supporter – even the bill's sponsors.

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted in favor. The House vote was technically not recorded.

HB179 would prohibit taxes on electricity ratepayers to pay for natural gas pipelines.

Rep. Lewicke is a sponsor.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: The House vote was not recorded.

HB493 would require land owners to be reimbursed for the full, fair market value of land taken by eminent domain for natural gas pipelines. Sen. Avard and Rep. Lewicke are sponsors.

Status: Defeated in the House

Our Reps: The House vote was not recorded.

HB621 would create a Road Usage Fee that would tax only fuel efficient cars.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: The House vote was not recorded.

Health Care

* SB234 would create a needle exchange program

Status: Signed into law

Our Reps: The votes in the Senate and House were not recorded.

SB236 would make the Medicaid expansion under ObamaCare permanent.

Status: Defeated in the Senate

Our Reps: The Senate vote was not recorded.

HB587 and SB224 would prohibit “conversion therapy” that seeks to change a person's sexual orientation for persons under 18.

Status: SB224 was passed by the Senate. Both bills were retained in committee in the House until next year.

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted against.

Privacy

HB97 would place restrictions on the use of drones.

Status: Passed by the House, defeated by the Senate.

Our Reps: The votes in the Senate and House were not recorded.

HB171 would prohibit the state and local governments from assisting federal agencies in the collection of electronic data without a warrant. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Passed by the House, but defeated by the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard voted in favor of the bill. The House vote was not recorded.

Judiciary

HB133 would instruct juries that they can ignore criminal offenses if they choose.

Status: Passed by the House, but defeated by the Senate

Our Reps: Sen. Avard and Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr and Lewicke voted in favor. Rep.

Gargasz voted against.

Broadband Internet Access

HB191 and SB170 would allow towns to take out a bond for the purpose of expanding broadband Internet access.

Status: HB191 was defeated in the House. SB170 was retained in committee in the Senate until next year.

Our Reps: Rep. Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Ammon, Belanger, and Carr voted against. Rep. Gargasz was excused for the day.

* HB238 would establish a committee to study broadband access to the Internet

Status: Signed by the Governor

Our Reps: Rep. Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr, and Gargasz voted against.

Civil Rights

HB478 would expand NH's civil rights laws to include "gender identity", making it illegal to discriminate against transgendered people based on employment, housing and public accommodations.

Status: Defeated in the House

Our Reps: Rep. Gargasz voted in favor. Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr and Lewicke voted against.

Reproductive Health Care

HB578 would prohibit termination of a pregnancy after "viability", defined as being capable of being supported by life support systems.

Status: Defeated in the House

Our Reps: The House vote was not recorded

HB589 would repeal the 25 foot "buffer zone" around family planning clinics in which protesters are prohibited. Sen. Avard is a sponsor.

Status: Defeated by the House

Our Reps: Rep. Ammon, Belanger, Carr and Lewicke voted in favor. Rep. Gargasz voted against.

Where to find more information

The New Hampshire legislature web site is 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.

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

Hollis Brookline Journal

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

Hollis, Brookline, Mason Reps:

Sen. Kevin Avard (R) (603) 271-4151 Kevin.Avard@leg.state.nh.us

Nashua Wards 1, 2, 5, Hollis, Brookline, Mason, Greenville, New Ipswich, and Rindge

Rep. Jim Belanger (R) P: (603)465-2301 Jim.belanger@leg.state.nh.us

Hollis

Rep. Carolyn Gargasz (R) P: (603)465-7463 cgargasz@cs.com

Hollis

Rep. Keith Ammon (R) P: (603)296-9879 Keith.Ammon@leg.state.nh.us

Hollis, Milford, Mont Vernon, New Boston

Rep. John Carr (R) P: (603)673-3603 john.carr@leg.state.nh.us

Brookline and Mason

Rep. John Lewicke (R) P: (603) 878-2610

Brookline and Mason