

Legislative Alert for **June 3- 13, 2019**, from League of Women Voters NH--

Breaking news! On May 30, **the Senate voted 16-8 to override Governor Sununu's veto of the bill to repeal NH's death penalty.** This meets the 2/3 vote requirement, and last week's House vote also met the 2/3 mark. That means New Hampshire becomes the 21<sup>st</sup> state to repeal the death penalty.

Also on May 30 in the Senate, the following bills were voted on:

**HB 25-A**, making **appropriations for capital improvements** passed unanimously.

**HB 186**, establishing a **state minimum wage** and providing for adjustments to the minimum wage was re-referred to committee (for further study) on a voice vote.

**HB 481-FN-A-L**, **legalization and regulation of cannabis**. Re-referred to Committee on a voice vote. *That means study this further, perhaps bring it back in 2020.*

**HB 567**, **switching to the Atlantic Time Zone** in NH. Killed on a voice vote.

**HB 480-FN**, relative to **sports betting**. With some amendments, passed on a voice vote.

Related to **Election Law**:

**HB 531**, expanding methods for the **delivery of absentee ballots** cast by elderly or disabled citizens passed on a voice vote.

**HB 105-FN**, relative to **domicile residency, voter registration**, and investigation of voter verification letters passed 14-10, along party lines. *This bill **would overturn the dreaded SB3** from 2017, so League definitely supports this bill! Now it's up to the Governor.*

**HB 315**, gets NH out of the error-prone **Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck Program**. Passed 14-10. *[this bill as amended directs the Sec. Of State to enter into another but unnamed interstate voter registration checking method. League supports.]*

**HB 611-FN**, allowing voters to **vote by absentee ballot**. Passed 13-11. *This bill allows anyone who wishes to do so to vote by absentee ballot, rather than just those who meet narrow requirements. League supports. Now would be a good time to ask the Governor to sign this bill.*

**HB 651**, allowing the use of **campaign funds** for child care expenses. Passed 15-9. *[already allowed by federal law for congressional candidates.]*

**HB 486**, department of corrections procedures concerning the restoration of the voting rights of felons. Passed on a voice vote. *League has committed to helping the Dept. of Corrections and Dept. of Probation and Parole spread the word that in NH released felons do have the*

*right to vote. This bill doesn't change the law, simply requires better information be given to released felons.*

**HB 656** was amended and passed, establishing a **commission to study prescription drug prices and health insurance costs.**

At the end of the session the Senate voted with very little discussion to either **concur** with changes made to a variety of Senate bills passed by the House, or to request a **committee of conference** to resolve the differences. They voted concurrence on 7 bills and committee of conference on one (I think.) *[see note at end of this alert that explains how committees of conference work, as copied from NH School Bds Assn and the House Calendar.]*

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**The HOUSE will next meet in voting session on June 5 at 1 pm and June 6 at 10 am and June 13 at 10 am.**

Among the bills they will vote on June 5 & 6 are the following. The entire list is available in this week's Calendar: [http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2019/HC\\_27.pdf](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2019/HC_27.pdf)

Election law:

**SB 156**, puts some restrictions on political contributions made by limited liability companies.

Recommended Ought to Pass 12-8 *[League supports]*

Of general public interest are these bills:

**SB 241-FN-A**, funding for the project development phase of the **capitol corridor rail project**;

Recommended Ought To Pass 12-8

**SB 292-FN**, implementation of the new mental health 10-year plan. Recommended Ought To Pass unanimously.

**SB 290-FN** "This bill makes several updates to the **Granite Advantage Health Care Program**. The majority of the committee is concerned with the possibility of a significant loss of coverage for our Medicaid Expansion enrollees, as happened in Arkansas where the imposition of a work requirement lead to 18,000 recipients losing coverage. This bill does not eliminate the community engagement requirement but establishes a trigger for its elimination..." Recommended Ought To Pass 13-9.

**SB 10**, establishing the **state minimum hourly rate** based on whether an employer offers paid sick days to an employee. Recommended Ought To Pass 12-8.

**SB 41-FN**, relative to historical racing. *[basically these are slot machines with a twist.]*

"...Allows use of historic racing terminals only under a charitable gaming license... Prevents any new charitable gaming licensee who gained a license after May 1, 2019 from installing

these machines until after July 1, 2022; giving time for assessment of machine installation and usage by existing licensees. Strengthens language in several sections to ensure that these machines in the future will not function or be characterized as slot machines...”

Recommended Ought To Pass 14-6. *[League generally opposes expanded gambling in NH, and we wonder if these gussied up slot machines are allowed in charitable gaming parlors will they later be allowed in bars and restaurants?]*

**SB 74-FN-A**, (New Title) register of deeds fees used to support **LCHIP** and establishing a committee to study the **economic impact of land conservation**. Recommended Ought To Pass 11-9.

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**The SENATE Calendar for this week was delayed. They were waiting to include updated information on the budget, which they will vote on. The Senate will next meet in voting session on June 6.**

They will vote on the state budget, which has been amended since it passed the House.

Related to Election Law:

**HB 556**, allowing municipalities to **process absentee ballots** before election day.

Recommended Ought to Pass, Vote 5-0. *This is processing only, not counting of absentee ballots. Makes sense in communities with large numbers of absentee ballots.*

*Without a Calendar, we don't know which other bills they will vote on. You can check the Calendar yourself when it is posted: Go to this link and pick the May 30 or 31 item in the left column. [http://gencourt.state.nh.us/Senate/calendars\\_journals/default.html](http://gencourt.state.nh.us/Senate/calendars_journals/default.html)*

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**Committee hearings coming up:** In general the committees' work is done for the session.

#### **Tuesday, June 4**

HOUSE RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT, Room 305, LOB

1:00 p.m. Full committee work session on bills amended by the Senate

#### **TUESDAY, JUNE 11**

HOUSE ELECTION LAW, Room 308, LOB

10:00 a.m. Full committee work session to review senate amendments to House election law bills.

No other House committees are meeting.

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[What is a Committee of Conference?](#)

Committees of conference occur when the second chamber of the legislature acts on a bill and passes a different version from the chamber of origin. In essence, they have passed a bill with an amendment.

The House and the Senate are currently in the process of taking final action on all bills they received from the other chamber. If the House has passed a Senate bill without amendment, or if the Senate has passed a House bill without amendment, the bill finds its way to the Governor's desk. If the second chamber has amended and passed a bill it received from the first chamber, the bill goes back to the first chamber, which may either **concur** with the amendment and send the bill to the Governor, **"non-concur"** and let the bill die, or non-concur and **request a committee of conference**. When the first chamber requests a committee of conference, the second chamber can either accede (pronounced "ack-SEED,") to that request and form a committee of conference or reject the request and let the bill die. A committee of conference may agree on the House version of a bill, the Senate version, or a compromise between the two. Or it may fail to reach agreement at all, in which case the bill dies. Assuming the committee of conference reaches agreement, it reports its recommendation to both the House and the Senate, and each chamber then votes separately on the recommendation. It is an up-or-down vote, with no opportunity for amendment. If both chambers approve the committee of conference report, the bill passes and goes to the Governor. If either chamber rejects it, the bill dies.

*Above was lifted from NH School Bds Assn email; adapted from NH Municipal Association,  
April 2017*

2 more facts: the House Speaker and the Senate President are the ones to appoint the members of the committees of conference, and "A unanimous vote of both the House and Senate Conferees, voting separately, is necessary for an agreed upon report to be sent to the House and Senate. Reports of all Committees of Conference must be filed with the Office of Legislative Services by June 20"