

**Legislative alert for May 6-9** from League of Women Voters NH.

**Breaking news: Governor Sununu has just vetoed the death penalty repeal bill.** HB455 passed both the House and the Senate with large votes. The NH House is expected to vote on the bill later this month, which will require a 2/3 majority of those present and voting in order to override the veto. If the override is successful in the House, the bill will move over to the Senate for a similar override vote. *If this bill matters to you, let your reps and senators know now.*

**The Senate will meet in session on Wednesday, May 15, at 10 am.** List of bills will be in next week's Calendar.

**The next House Session will be on Wednesday, May 8 and Thursday, May 9 at 10:00 am if necessary.** Many of the bills are on the Consent Calendar (unlikely to be floor debate on these.) No League priority items this week. Of general public interest are the following bills to be voted on. Now is the time to contact your state reps to make your views known. Full list of bills with their committee recommendations is in the Calendar:

[http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2019/HC\\_23.pdf](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2019/HC_23.pdf)

**SB 275-FN, requiring that all of the state's motor vehicles will be zero emissions vehicles by the year 2039.** Recommended Ought To Pass 12-8. "The goal of this bill is to set a twenty-year target to update the state purchased and leased vehicle fleet to zero emissions vehicles, to the extent feasible and practicable, by 2041. This bill is an aspirational goal, not a mandate...." see details on p.12 of this week's Calendar.

**SB 310-FN-A-LOCAL, casino gambling.** Recommended Inexpedient to Legislate 17-2. "This bill allows the licensing and operation of two video lottery and table gaming facilities. The fiscal note is only applicable if a buyer comes forward to purchase the two licenses available. Casino bills have been introduced every session since 1999; while there may have been a time when casinos made sense for NH, that time has come and gone...." see p. 13 of the Calendar. *League supports killing this bill, based on our state position regarding expanded gambling as an unreliable source of state revenue.*

**SB 314-FN, relative to release of a defendant pending trial.** Recommended unanimously Ought To Pass. "This bill amends the procedure for considering the dangerousness of a defendant for the purpose of determining whether the defendant should be released pending trial. It establishes the position of Bail Reform Coordinator in the Department of Justice and reestablishes the commission on pretrial scheduling and pretrial services, and waives the bail commissioners fee for indigent defendants...."

**SB 142-LOCAL, requiring feminine hygiene products in school restrooms.** Recommended Ought To Pass 13-7. Minority objection is that it is an unfunded mandate on schools.

**SB 5-FN-A making an appropriation to the dept of health and human services for Medicaid provider rates for mental health and substance misuse and emergency shelter and stabilization services.** Vote 13-9 Majority OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. Minority: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. Rep. Joelle Martin for the Majority of Finance. "This bill makes an additional current year \$3 million appropriation to the Dept of Health and Human Services to enhance provider rates for mental health and substance use disorder services. The bill also appropriates \$450,000 for emergency shelter and stabilization services for persons experiencing substance use disorder. The majority of the committee felt that the bill appropriately reverses recent provider rate decreases as well as helps to restore critical Medicaid mental health and substance use treatment and recovery services." See p. 15 for minority view. *Maybe different amendments?*

**Public hearings:** Looks like all the House committee hearings this week and into early next week are either work sessions or executive sessions. Public may observe but no public testimony will be taken. Full list is in the House Calendar. Senate committees are working on the budget and a number of bills.

**Tuesday, May 7**

SENATE EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, Room 103, LOB

9:00 am Executive session on pending legislation

10:30 am John Tobin will give a **presentation on school funding**. (John Tobin Esq and Andru Volinsky have presented around the state about the school funding situation. Mr. Tobin will speak directly to the Education Committee in this presentation.)

SENATE JUDICIARY, Room 100, State House

9:00 a.m. **HB 481-FN-A-L, relative to the legalization and regulation of cannabis** and making appropriations therefor.

### **Wednesday, May 8**

SENATE WAYS AND MEANS, Room 100, State House

9:00 am. **Revenue estimates** (*can't appropriate what you don't have...*)

SENATE ELECTION LAW LOB rm 102 11:00 (*see note at end from NHMA*)

### **Thursday, May 9**

COMMERCE, Room 102, LOB

9:00 a.m. **HB 717-FN, prohibiting prescription drug manufacturers from offering coupons or discounts to cover insurance copayments or deductibles.**

9:30 a.m. **HB 186, establishing a state minimum wage** and providing for adjustments to the minimum wage.

SENATE ELECTION LAW AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, Room 102, LOB

1:00 pm Executive session, possibly including our League priority bill **HB706** as amended in wonderful bi-partisan fashion at the committee's hearing on May 1. *This bill as amended is an opportunity for NH to have an **independent redistricting commission!** League supports!*

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE is again hard at work all week on the state budget. For specific presentations, see the Senate Calendar for this week:

[http://gencourt.state.nh.us/Senate/calendars\\_journals/calendars/2019/sc%2021.pdf](http://gencourt.state.nh.us/Senate/calendars_journals/calendars/2019/sc%2021.pdf)

NHMA just posted these:

The Senate Finance committee will hold three public hearings on the state budget next week. The hearings are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, May 7, at 1:00 p.m. in Representatives Hall, State House, Concord
- Tuesday, May 7, at 6:00 p.m. in Representatives Hall, State House, Concord
- Wednesday, May 8, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chambers, City Hall, Manchester

Also from NHMunicipal Assn, this notice of interest to local election officials:

**Early Processing of Absentee Ballots:** The Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee has a hearing on **HB 556**, which would allow moderators to begin processing absentee ballots before election day. Under current law, the processing of absentee ballots may not begin until two hours after the polls open on election day. The bill would allow the ballots to be processed (not counted) within the seven-day period before election day. The moderator would be required to post notice of the session at least 48 hours in advance, and citizens would be allowed to observe the process in the same manner as they may on election day. The presence of at least three other election officers, in addition to the moderator, would be required. There are many polling places that receive several hundred absentee ballots for a state election. Accounting for all ballots, one at a time, is a painstaking process that can easily take several hours. Doing this during the election is a significant disruption—it takes the moderator and clerk away from other duties, and it creates a much greater risk of error as ballot clerks are trying to mark absentee voters on the checklist at the same time they are checking in voters who are voting in person. The alternative—processing the ballots after the polls close—leads to extremely late nights (for workers who often have been there since 6:00 a.m. or earlier) and delayed reporting. HB

556 gives local election officials a third option that could avoid these problems. To be clear, it is only an option—if a moderator does not choose it, the ballots would be processed at the polls on election day. The hearing is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 8, at 11:00 a.m., in LOB Room 102**. Moderators and others who are interested in helping to make elections run more efficiently are encouraged to attend the hearing or contact members of the committee.