

Legislative Alert April 16-20, 2018, from League of Women Voters NH

The House will next be in session on April 19, beginning at 10 am. They are also scheduled to meet on April 26, May 2 and May 3. The complete list of bills to be voted on can be found on this week's House Calendar at http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljourns/calendars/2018/HC_15.pdf

The Senate will next be in session on April 19, beginning at 10 am. The list of bills to be voted on can be found on this week's Senate Calendar at <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/scaljourns/calendars/2018/sc%2017.pdf>

Expressing your views to your own legislators is still very important. Except for bills that have been voted Inexpedient to Legislate, nothing is dead. Even "tabled" bills can be revived for discussion and a vote, with a 2/3 vote of the House or the Senate where the bill lies.

Bills of particular interest to be voted on in the HOUSE on April 19 include the following:

ELECTION LAW SB 363, prohibiting political expenditures by foreign nationals. This bill extends existing federal prohibitions on political expenditures by foreign nationals to the State of New Hampshire for its state elections. Vote 18-0. *[League and our friends at Open Democracy are delighted with this unanimous support by the Election Law committee for a campaign finance reform bill !]*

JUDICIARY SB 395, access to records under the right-to-know law. INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE Vote 17-0. As amended by the Senate, this bill attempts to provide access to public records at alternative times and places. The prime sponsor testified against the bill, citing the lack of specific and workable resolutions to the underlying needs. *[Those in municipal govt will be interested in this one, and should note that the committee was unanimous in opposition to the Senate version.]*

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT SB 170, giving authority to towns to issue bonds for the expansion of broadband infrastructure. OUGHT TO PASS Vote 16-0. Certain conditions must be met before bonds can be issued and the bill contains the provision for public-private partnerships for financing purposes. Public hearing testimony strongly indicated that enactment of this legislation would be a significant catalyst for economic development in many rural areas of New Hampshire.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SB 556-FN, changes in bail procedures (3 specific ways) and procedures for annulment of a criminal record. OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT Vote 17-2. *[for League members who participated in our 2009-2012 study of the issues facing women incarcerated in NH, this bill to change bail procedures comes as welcome news. For more information read the detailed argument given on pp 11 and 12 of the Calendar.]*

FINANCE SB 582-FN, (New Title) authorizing an assessment to determine appropriate caseload and workload standards for the division for children, youth and families; establishing additional child protection services positions in the division; relative to foster care and adoption programs and services; This bill makes an appropriation of \$100,000 to the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to determine the appropriate case load for child protection staff.

MAJORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE. MINORITY: OUGHT TO PASS. Vote 15-10. See the arguments of both sides on page 13 of the House Calendar.

Bills of particular interest to be voted on in the SENATE on April 19 include the following:

EDUCATION: a slew of bills that have already passed the House and come out of Senate Education with 4-0 recommendations, so likely to be little debate. One exception is

HB 1744 authorizing a parent to exempt his or her child from participating in the statewide assessment program. Recommended Ought to Pass, Vote 3-1

FINANCE: These education bills come out of House Finance with split recommendations:

HB 1315, prohibiting the university system funds from being spent to oppose the formation of unions and collective bargaining units. Inexpedient to Legislate, Vote 4-2.

HB 1354, adding the speaker of the house of representatives and senate president as permanent members of the university system board of trustees. Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 4-2.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

HB 587-FN, This bill prohibits licensed counselors from engaging in conversion therapy with a person under 18 year of age. Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 3-2.

JUDICIARY

HB 1788-FN-L relative to costs charged under the right-to-know law. Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 3-2. The bill changes the language for copying documents requested by someone under the Right To Know law from “actual costs” to a cap of 10 cents a page (big documents like housing development plans would be more expensive to copy) and apparently thumb-drive or other kinds of copying are not well spelled out in the bill. *[League has not observed this bill, but the NH Municipal Assn cites the preceding concerns. Local officials may want to weigh in with their Senators on this one.]*

League has been observing or testifying at a number of hearings on bills that are being amended by the second body. This is, of course, allowed and often results in a better bill (more eyes, more input, fine-tuning of language, etc.) But it does mean that a committee of conference may be needed as the end of the session draws near, or that debate in the first body could be heated as they discuss an amended version that doesn't hew to what they originally supported. Should be an exciting May.

Hearings or work sessions or executive sessions on bills of League and great public interest coming up in the next week include the following. Reminder that the full lists of bills being discussed in committees appear in the House and Senate calendars, accessible from this webpage:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>

MONDAY, APRIL 16

1:30 pm SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, State House room 100. **[civil rights]**

HB1319, the Transgender Nondiscrimination Bill that extends civil rights to transgender individuals.

[League supports this civil rights bill.]

HOUSE FINANCE - DIVISION III, Rooms 210-211, LOB

[health & human services]

9:00 a.m. Division work session on SB 592-FN-A, relative to the child welfare system.

11:00 a.m. SB 590-FN-A, making a supplemental appropriation to the state loan repayment program and relative to emergency involuntary admissions, the child protection act, and the developmental disabilities wait list and making appropriations therefor.

1:00 p.m. Division work session on SB 313-FN, reforming New Hampshire's **Medicaid** and Premium Assistance Program, establishing the granite workforce pilot program, and relative to certain liquor funds.

[We have not usually noted Commissions in these alerts, but they can be of interest to people with specific interests. The following one has been meeting regularly this session.]

COMMISSION TO STUDY THE LEGALIZATION, REGULATION, AND TAXATION OF
MARIJUANA (RSA 318-B:46)

9:00 a.m. Rooms 202-204, LOB Presentation

9:45 a.m. Rooms 202-204, LOB Public comment: Time Limited to three minutes per speaker. Please be aware the meeting will close at 11:00 a.m. Written testimony will be accepted.

TUESDAY, APRIL 17

HOUSE EDUCATION, Room 207, LOB

[education; gun violence]

9:30 a.m. Executive session on bills including the following:

SB 357, relative to safe school zones and relative to syringe service programs *[will this bill be amended with a version of Sen. Hennessey's gun-free school zones amendment? Don't know.]*

SB 432-FN-L, establishing a commission to study whether it is in the best interest of students to require schools to offer an SAT preparation course as an elective;

SB 435, alternative programs for granting credit leading to graduation;

SB 437, robotics education development program;

SB 525-FN, prohibiting the distribution of adult education financial assistance to any student who is not a legal resident.

HOUSE FINANCE, LOB room 210-211

[affordable housing]

10:00 am [SB 557](#), a bi-partisan sponsored bill that will allow for more development of housing in the Granite State by providing an expedited appeals process for applicants who wish to appeal a local zoning or planning board decision. The fiscal notes states: "This bill establishes a Housing Appeals Board with authority to hear and affirm, reverse, or modify appeals of final decisions of municipal boards, committees and commissions regarding question of housing and housing development. The board shall have concurrent, appellate jurisdiction with the superior court and may adopt rules under RSA 541-A necessary for carrying out its functions. Members of the board shall be appointed by the supreme court and commissioned by the governor for a term of 3 years. The board shall charge a \$65 filing fee when no filing fee has been otherwise specified by statute...."

The New Hampshire Municipal Association states applicants may choose to appeal a land use board decision to either the appeals board or superior court. The appeals board would have an expedited process and would not be bound by rules of evidence. Appeals may be less costly for a municipality to defend than an appeal in superior court. However, the availability of this option may result in an increased number of appeals, thereby increasing municipal costs. The association is unable to estimate the cost associated with such appeals or the number of appeals, therefore the effect on municipal expenditures is indeterminable."

11:00 a.m.

Public hearing on non-germane amendment 2018-1487h to SB 590-FN-A, making a supplemental appropriation to the state loan repayment program, relative to emergency involuntary admissions, the child protection act, and the developmental disabilities wait list and making appropriations therefor, and relative to modifying the Medicaid enhancement tax to include health care services provided by nursing facility services, ambulatory surgical center services, therapist services, other nursing services, and laboratory and x-ray services. The amendment modifies the Medicaid enhancement tax to include health care services provided by nursing facility services, ambulatory surgical center services, therapist services, other nursing services, and laboratory and x-ray services. Copies of the amendment are available in the Sergeant-at-Arms' Office, Room 318, State House

HOUSE FINANCE - DIVISION II, Room 209, LOB **[school 'voucher' bill]**
1:00 pm Division work session on SB 193-FN. *[League will observe...again]*

SENATE FINANCE Room 103, STATE HOUSE **[recovery programs]**
1:00 p.m. HB 1626-FN Hearing on proposed Amendment #2018-1417s, requiring the governor's commission on alcohol and drug abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery to report on the cost effectiveness of funded programs and relative to liquor commission shortfalls.

SENATE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Room 101, LOB **[Medicaid]**
1:15 p.m. HB 1816-FN, Medicaid managed care.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18 **[Marsy's Law]**
HOUSE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY JOINT WITH JUDICIARY, Rooms 206-208, LOB 10:00 a.m. Full committee work session on CACR 22, relating to rights for crime victims.

THURSDAY, APRIL 19
HOUSE ELECTION LAW, Room 308, LOB **[postponed town elections; absentee ballots]**
1:00 p.m. Or one hour after the close of session. Full committee work session on SB 438, postponement of local elections;
SB 527-FN-L, absentee voting (matching signatures)
[The committee's work on these bills on 4/11/18 was earnest, confusing, like watching sausage being made as two amendments to each bill were discussed—but nothing has come out of the sausage machine yet. Maybe at this meeting...?]

Looking ahead a bit---

TUESDAY, APRIL 24
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 306, LOB **[licensing]**
11:00 a.m. Executive session on SB 334-FN, temporary licenses for occupations and professions for persons from other states. *[this one is for you, Pat.]*

MONDAY, APRIL 30 **[education funding]**
COMMITTEE TO STUDY EDUCATION FUNDING AND THE COST OF AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN ADEQUATE EDUCATION (HB 356, Chapter 190:1, Laws of 2017), Room 209, LOB
10:00 a.m. Regular meeting. *[League will observe, as usual.]*
