

## League of Women Voters legislative alert for week of Feb. 20-22, 2018

### The NH House and Senate will each meet in full session on Thurs., Feb. 22.

**Bills in the House on Feb. 22:** The bills on the House Consent Calendar (the committee that heard the bill voted unanimously or near unanimously on its recommendation) is 10 pages long, which will be dealt with quickly unless a House member pulls a bill off consent for discussion. *(Gossipy note: The word going around various committees this past week was that the House leadership wanted as many bills as possible to get near unanimous votes in committee. With 500 or so bills to be dealt with by March 22, committee members were urged to vote with the majority when it was obvious in discussion that the minority view would not prevail. League heard several committee chairs make oblique reference to this. We also observed committee members voting reluctantly against their own positions. Raises the question—do we simply have too many bills submitted each year in our Legislature?)*

Bills that will be discussed on the floor of the House, in which League has particular interest or there has been great public interest, include those listed below. No Election Law or Education priority bills are up for a vote this week. Page numbers from the Calendar are listed in parentheses in case you want to read the pro-con committee statements for yourself. All of the bills to be voted on and the majority/minority reports can be found in this week's House Calendar: [http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2018/HC\\_7.pdf](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2018/HC_7.pdf)

**If you wish to express your views on any bills to your own reps or senator, now is the time to call or email them. You should mention the bill number and the general topic of the bill, identify yourself as a constituent, and ask them to support or oppose the bill.**

**HB 1790-FN-A**, establishing a NH health access corporation. INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE 11-9. The majority of the committee believes that NH residents already have adequate access to high quality health care in New Hampshire and prefer to find ways to make it more affordable by reducing the cost of health insurance. Creating a health access corporation is unnecessary and unrealistic at this time. (p. 14)

**HB 1477-FN**, relative to annulment of arrests or convictions for possession of 3/4 of an ounce of marijuana or less. OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. Vote 15-4. Provides a mechanism for those who have criminal records for arrests or convictions for possession of 3/4 of an ounce or less of marijuana that took place before September 16, 2017 (the day the law decriminalizing possession of marijuana went into effect) to have those convictions and arrests annulled. The legislature voted last year to remove the criminal penalty for possession of a small amount of marijuana and make possession a civil penalty was partly based on the long term negative impact a criminal record has upon individuals and their families, including loss of housing, loss of employment, denial of student loans and other barriers to social well being. (p. 16)

**HB 1542**, relative to carrying a pistol or revolver on university system and community college system property. Majority: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE. Minority: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. Vote 15-5. Here is the amended language in part: "Nothing in this section shall be construed to grant the [college & university system] additional authority to regulate firearms on its property beyond what is in state or federal statute." Analysis at end of bill says "This bill allows any person who is not otherwise prohibited by state or federal law to carry a

pistol or revolver indoors on campus and on campus grounds of the university system of NH and the community college system of NH.” (Note: in January 2018 the UNH Policy Manual was amended to include the following: “The use and possession of all firearms, other dangerous weapons intended to inflict injury, or explosives are prohibited on the Durham, Concord, and Manchester core campuses of the University of New Hampshire.” That seems to have spurred this bill.) *Sure to generate discussion!* (p. 16)

**CACR 12**, Providing that judges be elected for specific terms. Majority: OUGHT TO PASS. Minority: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE. Vote was 9-8.

Rep. Kurt Wuelper for the Majority of Judiciary writes: “This resolution changes the way we select judges from appointment for life to election for a term to be specified by the General Court....will give the voting public a voice about who will be making crucial decisions that have deep and wide impact on all our lives [and] will add a measure of accountability for judges that is currently absent. ... would empower the people to remove a judge when they consider his/her decisions outrageous. Opponents argue that this resolution will “politicize” the judicial selection process, but our system is already political, as one political party typically holds both the Governor’s office and control of the Executive Council and thereby the appointment process. Thirty eight states have some type of judicial elections for their supreme court and 39 states hold elections for trial courts...” (see p. 19 for the minority view) (Sadly League missed the hearings on this bill and has not researched the issue.) *This is a proposed Constitutional Amendment. It requires a vote by 3/5 of each body in the Legislature to go on the November ballot, where 60% of those voting on the question must approve it to be adopted.*)

**CACR 16**, Providing that an individual’s right to live free of governmental interference is fundamental. Majority: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. Minority: REFER FOR INTERIM STUDY. Vote 15-2. Rep. Kurt Wuelper for the Majority of Judiciary. “This constitutional amendment formally recognizes our right to privacy in our personal information [including] the modern ability to collect/analyze personal information, things like health data, information from our DNA, etc.” Rep. Timothy Horrigan for the Minority of Judiciary. The minority agrees with the majority that people have a natural right to privacy. The proposed language, however, was vague and subject to misinterpretation by the courts. The minority is also concerned that the amendment might interfere with legitimate law enforcement activities. This amendment is not ready to be placed on the general election ballot.” (*Another proposed Constitutional Amendment. See process above*) (p. 19)

### **Bills in the Senate on Feb. 22:**

A number of bills came out of committee with a unanimous vote that will be handled quickly on the Consent Calendar. Generating debate will be bills on the Regular Calendar, including those listed below. Amendments can be found in this week’s Senate Calendar, but the Senate does not publish the majority/minority recommendations as the House does:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/scaljournals/calendars/2018/sc.8.pdf>

**SB 438** Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 4-0. relative to the postponement of local elections. (*League supports the part of the bill that standardizes procedures for towns facing blizzards on election day but objects to the involvement of the Secretary of State in that decision as it is a local election, under the control of the local elections officials.*)

**SB 404-FN-A**, phasing out the tax on interest and dividends. Ought to Pass, Vote 3-2.

**SB 586-FN-A-L**, relative to casino gambling. Committee recommends Interim Study, Vote 3-2. *(Usually League supports further study of issues, but casinos as a source of reliable state funding should be a dead issue by now. House voted down a similar bill last year, so why a study should make a difference is beyond us. League prefers Inexpedient to Legislate.)*

---

### House hearings: TUESDAY, FEB. 20

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Room 302, LOB

Beginning at 9:30 am: Work session on a number of bills including HB 1516, establishing a commission to examine the feasibility of the New England states entering into a compact for a **single payer health care program**

EDUCATION, Room 207, LOB

10:00 a.m. Executive session on HB 1403, relative to members of the **state board of education** as well as executive session on other bills remaining on their agenda. Exec session will continue on Wednesday with bills about **ESSA**.

FINANCE - DIVISION II, Room 209, LOB

1:00 p.m. work session on SB 193-FN, the **school “voucher” bill**

FINANCE - DIVISION III, Rooms 210-211, LOB

2:00 p.m. HB 1743-FN, relative to the **alcohol abuse prevention and treatment fund** and funding for the Sununu Youth Services Center. Public Hearing on non-germane amendment #2018-0636h to HB

1743-FN, relative to alcohol abuse prevention and treatment fund and funding for the Sununu Youth Services Center. (looks like a work session will immediately follow the hearing.)

JUDICIARY, Room 208, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1787-FN, relative to the rights of conscience for medical professionals (This hearing was transferred from another committee earlier. It relates to clinics that provide abortion and contraception counseling, would particularly affect small clinics providing those services if the doctor on duty has personal or religious objections.)

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY, Room 304, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1101-FN, regulating **groundwater pollution** caused by polluting emissions in the air, followed by a 1:30 on the bill. (this bill started out in Resources, passed the House with an amendment on a voice vote in January, then was assigned to the Science/Technology committee for more work.)

TRANSPORTATION, Room 203, LOB

1:00 p.m. HB 1459, prohibiting **autonomous vehicles** on New Hampshire highways (and any roadways, apparently)

### Senate hearings TUESDAY FEB. 20

FINANCE in Representatives Hall, State House (Note: this is about **Medicaid Expansion**, which will sunset at the end of this year if not reauthorized. More than 50,000 Granite Staters currently rely on Medicaid Expansion for access to quality and affordable health care.)

1:30 p.m. SB 313-FN, This hearing will be streamed live via the Internet at the following web address: <http://sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00288/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20180220/1024/15265>

### **House hearings WEDNESDAY, FEB. 21**

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Room 302, LOB  
beginning at 9:30, Work sessions on a number of bills, some continued from Tuesday, including HB 1362, authorizing individuals and certain businesses to **purchase health insurance from out-of-state companies**; and HB 1516, establishing a commission to examine the feasibility of the New England states entering into a **compact for a single payer health care program**.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY LAW room 206 in LOB. 11:00 exec session on a number of interesting bills.

### **Senate hearings WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21**

PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS Room 102, LOB 9:30 a.m. Executive Session  
WAYS AND MEANS Room 100, SH 10:00 a.m. Executive Session

---

**Looking two weeks ahead**—*The week of February 26-March 2 is school vacation week. No full House or Senate session scheduled, Most committees try to take some time off then too.*

### **House hearings TUESDAY, MARCH 6**

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Room 302, LOB  
10:15 a.m. HB 1471-FN, relative to telemedicine.  
11:00 a.m. HB 1822-FN, making hormonal contraceptives available directly from pharmacists by means of a standing order.  
1:30 p.m. Subcommittee work session on HB 1471-FN and HB 1822-FN

---

From advocates at **Housing Action NH** comes this notice:

**Rental Deposits Bill.** [House Bill 1485](#), proposes allowing landlords to increase security deposits to up to two months rent. If passed, the bill would deplete rental assistance programs, lean more heavily on charitable organizations, challenge cash-strapped students, cut into local welfare budgets and increase homeless shelter stays. The hearing before House Judiciary on January 24 included testimony from Manchester City Welfare, Southwestern Community Services, Cross Roads House, the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness, Nashua United Way, NH Legal Assistance and The Way Home in opposition. In a close vote on February 14, the Committee recommended the bill *inexpedient to legislate* by a vote of 10-8. (However, a floor vote in the House has not been scheduled yet. Maybe March 6?)

From advocates at the **ACLU** comes this call to action:

“Every year on Presidents’ Day, we honor our nation’s democracy. This year, it is more important than ever that we speak up about the critical role voters play in our elections. Certain lawmakers continue to attack the **voting rights** of eligible Granite State voters through bills like HB 372 and HB 1264 [the bills are very similar. Both make the issue of domicile more complicated for potential voters trying to register]. Call Governor Sununu on Tuesday, February 20 from 5 - 7 p.m. and let him know that we have not forgotten what he promised about **vetoing** HB 372 (and its 2018 twin, HB 1264).” (HB372 passed the House last year, was held over in the Senate and passed with an amendment, must now go back to the House. HB 1264 has not yet been scheduled for a House vote.)