

The League of Women Voters highlights the hearings below, covering League priority areas and some bills of great public interest, excerpted from the week's Calendars. Another source of info on upcoming bills/hearings is the American Friends Service Committee in NH. Click on "Subscribe" on their website for a weekly email: <https://www.afsc.org/office/concord-nh>

The House is not in session this week. Next House session probably Feb. 7. Next Senate session Thursday, Feb. 1, 10 am.

Committee hearings in NH Legislature WEEK OF JAN. 23-26 plus a few from the next couple of weeks too. **Complete list of hearings is in the Senate and House Calendars for this week.** *To read the text of a bill, go to this webpage*

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/quick_search.html and type in the number this way: hb1234 Click on Submit. When the bill comes up, click on Bill Text (on my computer, PDF is easier to read) LOB in room references below means Legislative Office Building, the building behind (across the street from) the Capitol. SH means State House

SENATE HEARINGS:

Tuesday, Jan. 23 ELECTION LAW AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS, Room 102, LOB

(These bills were scheduled for Jan. 16, postponed when other hearings ran long.)

9 am SB 440-FN, relative to prohibited political contributions [**League supports**—this is campaign finance enforcement].

9:30 am SB 527-FN-L, absentee voting [this bill would require those voting absentee to submit a photocopy of an acceptable photo ID such as a drivers license with the application. Failure to do so would have the elections officials revert to the current system of comparing the signature on the application with that on the ballot application, so at least there remains that "out" for people who don't drive, can't conveniently get a photocopy—such as the elderly or people with handicaps who wish to vote absentee for acceptable reasons and don't have photo ID copies handy. Some town elections officials support this, to make similar the ID procedures of in-person and absentee voters.]

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018 EDUCATION, LOB room 103

9:30 a.m. SB 382, withdrawal from cooperative school districts [House is hearing similar bills].

9:45 a.m. SB 431, non-academic surveys required to be filed by school districts to maintain federal funding.

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 2018 FINANCE Room 103, State House

1:00 p.m. SB 539-FN-A, making appropriations to the department of education for adequate education grants [applies to specific qualifying school districts].

2:00 p.m. SB 540-FN, funding full day kindergarten. [This amends the funding thru Keno proceeds bill passed last year, which would have pro-rated the funding if Keno didn't raise enough revenue. Presumably if this bill passes it would require more funding from state's General Funds. Discussion in Finance will be interesting.]

Thursday, Jan. 25, 2018 JUDICIARY Room 100, State House

1:20 p.m. SB 492-FN, prohibiting bump stocks in New Hampshire [violence prevention/gun control provision--"bump stocks" convert weapons to automatic weapons. Bill prohibits manufacture and sale and possession, creates a class A misdemeanor, but has so many exceptions for who can possess bump stocks that it may be meaningless. Does anyone want to follow this bill and report back to League?]

HOUSE HEARINGS

Tuesday, January 23 LOB room 308. ELECTION LAW Committee

10:00 a.m. HB 1520, access to ballots and verification counts of machine-counted ballots.

10:30 a.m. HB 1582, authority of the moderator to verify the device count.

11:00 a.m. HB 1486, "over voted" ballots.

1:00 p.m. [HB 1540](#) ranked choice voting [League does not have a national position on this issue, but at the state level we been following the efforts in Maine, led by League and others, to institute this method.]

Tuesday, Jan. 23, EDUCATION, Room 207, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1353, establishing a commission to study equal access and opportunity for students with disabilities to participate in athletics.

10:30 a.m. HB 1409, child restraint practices in schools and treatment facilities.

11:00 a.m. HB 1439, requirements for private schools that contract with school districts.

11:30 a.m. HB 1551, retention of records of individualized education programs.

1:00 p.m. HB 1354, adding the speaker of the house of representatives and senate president as permanent members of the university system board of trustees.

1:30 p.m. HB 1528, prohibiting discrimination in the university & community college systems.

Tuesday, Jan. 23 FINANCE - DIVISION II, Room 209, LOB

10:00 a.m. Division work session on HB 1814-FN-L, additional education grants to municipalities for the purpose of restoring reductions in stabilization grants

1:00 p.m. Division work session on SB 193-FN, [the school "vouchers" bill] League will observe. The room was packed on Jan. 16 when public testimony on both sides was heard for several hours.

Tuesday, Jan. 23 COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS, Room 302, LOB

9:15 a.m. Subcommittee work session on HB 628-FN, family and medical leave insurance program. This bill passed the House on 1/9 by a 183-151 vote. [Public testimony is not taken at work sessions, but the public is welcome to attend.]

Tuesday, Jan. 23 CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY, Room 204, LOB

10:20 a.m. HB 1753-FN, reducing the age for legally possessing alcohol from 21 to 20.

10:40 a.m. HB 1768-FN, establishing a cannabis control commission.

11:15 a.m. HB 1815-FN, penalties for possession of marijuana [this bill adds to existing language such things as requiring marijuana be kept in a child-proof container...]

Tuesday, Jan. 23 RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT, Room 305, LOB

beginning at 10 am, a number of bills dealing with water and air pollution. Does anyone want to cover these hearings, report back to League on bills to be followed?

Tuesday, Jan. 23 TRANSPORTATION, Room 203, LOB

1:00 p.m. HB 1583, indicating citizenship on drivers' licenses and nondrivers' identification cards [this bill is intended, in the words of the sponsors, to ensure that state issued IDs used for voter ID "protect the integrity of the vote." The bill adds the words "citizen USA" or "noncitizen USA," and an ID number to such cards and requires proof of such before issuance.]

Tuesday, Jan. 23 WAYS AND MEANS Room 202 LOB

1:30 p.m. HB 1802-FN-L, relative to the statewide education property tax. Currently about 30 property-rich towns raise more revenue in SWEPT than they would receive under student funding formulas for an adequate education. The towns keep those funds local, passing them on to the school districts. This bill would “require municipalities to remit any excess SWEPT to the state’s General Fund....Based on FY 2019 preliminary data, this would result in [nearly \$30 million] increase to the General Fund and a corresponding decrease to local revenue.” [League’s first reaction is to be concerned that money specifically raised for Education is going into the General Fund rather than into the Education Trust Fund. We will need to study the testimony on this.]

Wednesday, Jan. 24, EDUCATION, room 207 LOB.

10:00 a.m. Presentation by the NH School Board Association and the NH School Administrators Association on the cooperative school district organization and withdrawal process. [League hopes this presentation will clarify our confusion about cooperative districts. Some regional school districts are “cooperative districts” and some are not. We don’t know the difference yet.]

10:30 a.m. Full committee work session on the following bills all dealing with cooperative school districts: HB 1469-L, HB 1598-L, HB 1253, HB 1452, HB 1594, Executive session on pending legislation may be held throughout the day, time permitting.

Wednesday, Jan. 24 FINANCE - DIVISION II, Room 209, LOB

Beginning at 10 am, work sessions on a number of education related bills.

Wednesday, Jan. 24 CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY, Room 204, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1245, establishing a committee to study alternatives to bail for indigent persons. [League supports study of this topic]

Thursday Jan. 25, 2018 EDUCATION, Room 207, LOB

10:00 a.m. Executive session on HB 1452, HB 1819-FN, HB 1698-FN-L, HB 1593.

1:00 p.m. HB 1263, educational evaluation of home schooled children. League’s new education position supports submission of assessments to some entity; this bill does that and includes actions if home schooled students fail to demonstrate progress. **[League supports]**

Thursday Jan. 25, 2018 ELECTION LAW, Room 308, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1220, valid identification to obtain a ballot **[League opposes:** in this bill the target is people 65-70 who may no longer drive but do use an expired license as ID at the polls—makes the voter ID law tougher on the elderly and disabled.]

10:30 a.m. HB 1510-FN, voters using out-of-state drivers’ licenses as identification. **[League opposes.** This bill makes sense only if everyone who votes also currently owns a car in NH, so it is another student voter suppression bill, and could be seen as a poll tax to boot]

11:00 a.m. HB 1264, relative to the terms “resident,” “inhabitant,” “residence,” and “residency.” [yet another voter suppression bill to muddy the waters—**League opposes]**

1:00 p.m. HB 1543, relative to domicile of students for voting purposes. **[League opposes** this most heinous student voter suppression bill yet!]

2:00 p.m. HB 1772-FN, permitting online voting registration for those people with current NH drivers licenses. The online application would be sent with DMV specified data to the town in which the applicant lives. **[League supports.** Online is how we do many things including secure banking and tax filings; it should be possible to register securely online too, particularly since NH drivers licenses are acceptable ID for voting and this requires DMV confirmation.]

Friday, Jan. 26 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 has been attending these committee meetings, applauds the detailed work being done to understand the issues, what other states are doing, how NH can do a better job of apportioning scarce funds, etc. Thank you, representatives and senator serving on the committee.]

LOOKING AHEAD: SENATE HEARINGS in two weeks

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2018 EDUCATION Room 103, LOB

9:00 a.m. SB 435, requires state bd of education to adopt rules for approving alternative programs for granting credit leading to graduation.

9:15 a.m. SB 436, tuition in the community college system [for employees & their dependents only, a waiver of tuition.]

9:30 a.m. SB 437, relative to the robotics education development program.

9:45 a.m. SB 441, require school districts to adopt policy that final grades given by teachers, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, are final.

LOOKING AHEAD : HOUSE HEARINGS next week

Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2018 CHILDREN AND FAMILY LAW, LOB room 206

2:00 p.m. HB 1650, removing education as required by law as a criterion for determining child neglect. [text of bill gives as one reason “The Division for Children, Youth & Families staff are not trained to evaluate education but are trained to assess allegations of abuse or neglect.” Also cites that of 600 allegations investigated in the past, only 5% proved to be grounds for further action.]

Tuesday Jan. 30, 2018 EDUCATION LOB 207

1:00 p.m. HB 1492-L, relative to a course of action when a child’s attendance at a school has resulted in a manifest educational hardship. [an important bill for League to follow]

Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018 JUDICIARY, Room 208, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1680-FN, relative to abortions after viability [does not define gestation age for viability; could lead to criminal cases against physicians]

11:00 a.m. HB 1721-FN, relative to coercive abortions. [the text of this bill reveals a strong anti-abortion bias, is intrusive into the life of a woman. League opposes.]

1:00 p.m. HB 1319, prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity. [**League supports;** last year’s bill was tabled after hours of floor debate in the House.]

Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018 HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES LOB room 205

1:15 PM HB 1787. Mandates that health care providers who conscientiously object to abortion, sterilization, or the provision of contraception not be discriminated against or liable for their conscientious objection. Could be a problem for clinics with small staff that someone could come in for services and be told there is no one on duty who can work with them.