

Jan. 30-Feb. 1, 2018: 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 is Thursday, Feb. 1, 10 am. For a list of the bills see the Senate calendar and call or email your Senator to express your views.**

Bills to be voted on in by the full NH Senate on Thursday, Feb. 1:

All of the bills on the consent calendar received unanimous recommendations in their committees, so unlikely to be any controversy. On the regular calendar an education bill about procedures to be adopted for withdrawal from a cooperative school district is clear and sensible (SB382). A school funding bill corrects an underpayment in past years to certain districts (SB539). A bill to deal with infants born to addicted mothers was heavily amended, recommended by the committee unanimously (SB549).

The only bill that is likely to engender discussion is SB492, a bill to ban "bump stocks" that had an extensive hearing, with the conclusion drawn by many that the bill is badly written. Thus the committee recommendation of referral to Interim Study. A League member attended the hearing, agrees that the bill needs work. [violence prevention/gun control provision--"bump stocks" convert weapons to automatic weapons.]

Committee hearings in NH Legislature WEEK OF JAN. 30-Feb. 1 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. 30 ELECTION LAW AND INTERNAL AFFAIRS, Room 102, LOB

Executive session on a number of bills, some which League has been following. League will observe.

HOUSE HEARINGS

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 LOB room 302 COMMERCE & CONSUMER AFFAIRS

1:15 PM Subcommittee work session on a number of bills dealing with healthcare insurance, including HB1516 to create commission to study having a New England compact for a single-payer health plan and HB 1241 establishing a commission to study "healthcare for all" program. (Executive session likely to follow)

Tuesday, Jan. 30, EDUCATION, Room 207, LOB

Several bills in the morning, but League will focus on the hearing below:

1:00 pm HB 1492, regarding procedures when a child's attendance at a public school has resulted in a "manifest educational hardship."

Tuesday, January 30 LOB room 308. ELECTION LAW Committee

10:00 a.m. Hearings begin on several bills including two proposed constitutional amendments, special election procedures, and at

11:15 HB 1433 requiring presidential and vp candidates to disclose their federal tax returns. It is likely that discussion and executive session will be held on a number of previously heard bills of interest to League throughout the morning, including at

1 pm executive session on HB1773, which **League supports. HB 1773** establishes a fund to provide public campaign financing for eligible candidates for governor, exec councilor, and state senate. A big opportunity to lessen the impact of big money in state elections!

Tuesday, Jan. 30 FINANCE - DIVISION II, Room 209, LOB

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. Several work sessions have been planned and held.

Tuesday, Jan. 30 RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT, Room 305, LOB

beginning at 10 am, Executive Session on a number of bills dealing with water and air pollution.

Tuesday, Jan. 30 WAYS AND MEANS Room 202 LOB

1:00 p.m. Work sessions on a number of bills including 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 was 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 hear the discussion on this.]

The following three bills deal with restricting women's reproductive rights.

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 if they are forced to hire staff with conscientious objection to reproductive choice, and then someone could come in for services and be told there is no one on duty who can work with them.

Wednesday, Jan. 31, JUDICIARY, room 208 LOB.

10:00 a.m. **HB 1680**, creates the Viable Fetus Protection Act, which includes further restrictions on abortions than current federal law.

11:00 am **HB 1721** relative to coercive abortions **League opposes this bill as intrusive on the private reproductive decisions of women.**

1:00 pm HB 1319 prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity (this bill adds “gender identity” to the list of other things such as age, sex, race, creed, color, disability, etc. that are prohibited in employment, public accommodation, housing, etc. **League supports this basic protection of civil rights.**

Wednesday, Jan. 31 PUBLIC WORKS LOB room 201

10 am presentation on the state 10-year highway plan, followed by
1 pm HB 2018, testimony and discussion on the bill

Thursday Feb. 1, 2018 HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, Room 205-207, LOB

10:00 a.m. HB 1816, Medicaid managed care
1:15 p.m. HB 1813, Medicaid expansion

LOOKING AHEAD: SENATE HEARINGS in next few 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 in next few weeks

Tuesday, Feb. 6 EDUCATION LOB 207

10:00 am Presentation by NH Dept of Education on Every Student Succeeds Act

10:30 am Work session likely followed by executive session on the following bills: HB 1493, 1494, 1495, 1496, 1497, 1674.

Tuesday, Feb. 13 MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY GOVT. LOB room 301

this one is for our new friends and former League members in the Laconia area:

1:30 pm HB 1702, management of Gunstock Area.

Friday, Feb. 16 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.]