

To see how the House & Senate voted Jan 8 & 9 on bills we listed last week, go to our Hot Legislation page and click on the revised alert. http://lwvnh.org/files/legislative_alert_jan.8-9_2020_updated.pdf

Legislative Alert for Jan. 14-Jan. 28, 2020.

Normally the House and Senate Calendars list hearings on bills for the coming week only. This time the House appears very organized and has listed bills that will be heard by House committees through Jan. 28. They may add more hearings in next week's Calendar, but we appreciate the heads-up on some important bills and are including them here.

Skip this section if you're familiar with the way that new bills are handled by House and Senate committees.

Unlike some other legislatures, the NH legislature gives a hearing to every bill that has been submitted. Each bill is assigned to a specific committee (bills labeled HB... start in the House, move onto the Senate only after a positive vote by the entire House, and vice-versa). Committee hearings are public, and you can go to listen, to sign in as supporting or opposing the bill, or to testify if you wish.

Your testimony can be written or oral. If you have it in writing, make enough copies for the entire committee plus a couple of spares. But don't read it; the committees don't like that. Instead keep your oral remarks short and powerful, hitting your main point and perhaps explaining that supporting data is in your written testimony. If your testimony is oral only, be specific and concise. If someone else has already made the same points, you can simply say "my views have already been stated by others here today" when your name is called and you don't need to take the floor.

You can also send written testimony to committee members, either via email or mail. The committee members and their contact info can be found on each committee's webpage. Start here and navigate via the "Committee" menu item to the House committee hearing the bill you care about: <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/default.aspx>

For Senate committees, start here: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/senate/default.aspx>

Comments [in brackets] or *italics* following the bill titles below have been added by League.

[NOTE: LOB means Legislative Office Building. It is the building across the street behind the Capitol. The Capitol is called State House here.]

Senate hearings coming up:

Tuesday, Jan 14

Education LOB room 103

10:30 am SB 534, relative to state board of education rulemaking regarding criminal history records checks.

10:45 am SB 553, relative to school employee and school volunteer criminal history record checks.

Energy, State House room 103

9:15 am Hearing on proposed Amendment #2020-0040s, setting the maximum contaminant levels for certain perfluorochemicals in drinking water, to SB 287-FN, requiring the commissioner of the dept of environmental services to revise rules relative to PFC chemical contamination in drinking water.

Ways & Means, State House Room 100

9:00 am SB 474, "In order to increase transparency to taxpayers and to people considering moving to the state, the name of the state interest and dividends tax is changed to the income tax on interest and dividends." [so we can't say we have no income tax in NH anymore.]

9:15 am SB 528, relative to games of chance. [so-called charitable gaming, expands the permissible hours, increases the possible buy-in amounts, and may reduce the pay-outs]

9:30 am SB 475, enabling municipalities to adopt a property tax credit for densely-built workforce housing.

Thursday, Jan 16

Senate Election Law LOB room 102

1:00 am SB 489, relative to the absentee ballot application process. *[League note—seems to require additional identification of an absentee voter. We want to hear the reasons and process explained.]*

House hearings coming up:

Tuesday, Jan. 14

Commerce/Consumer Affairs LOB room 302

11:00 am HB 1662-FN, raises age to 21 for purchase, use, and possession of tobacco products and e-cigarettes

Election Law LOB room 308

10:30 am HB 1266, relative to absentee ballot request forms. *[League note: this bill would make a logical change of “will” to “may” in the statements on the application form, such as “I may be absent from the town on election day...” Thus a voter whose work schedule or commute time is irregular would be able to vote absentee, even though he/she can’t say definitely that getting to the polls on election day would be impossible.]*

Municipal/County Govt LOB 301

10:00 am HB 1296, requiring candidates for municipal office to comply with certain campaign finance reporting laws *[as candidates for state and federal office do now.]*

Science, Technology, Energy, Room 304, LOB

10:00 am HB 1430, establishing a commission to study attainment of a clean-energy electric grid by 2030.

Wednesday, Jan 15

Commerce/Consumer Affairs, Room 302, LOB

10:30 am HB 1624-FN, establishing a moratorium on sales of e-cigarettes

Election Law, Room 308, LOB

10:30 am HB 1415, establishing a committee to study the Montana disclosure act and anonymous out-of-state contributions preceding an election. *[League note: Montana seems to be ahead of the curve regarding the influence of outside money on elections. Worth a study, it would seem.]*

11:00 am HB 1668-FN-L, allows voting within 30 days before an election for persons with disabilities.

Municipal/County Govt, Room 301, LOB

11:00 am HB 1615-FN, requiring criminal background checks for persons brought into a library to interact with minors in library-sponsored events. *[personal note from Liz Tentarelli, a former library trustee—this bill would put a large burden on public libraries and make hiring outside presenters for children’s programs difficult. Librarians never leave children alone with outside presenters, so we would need to hear compelling reasons for this new requirement.]*

Ways & Means, Room 202, LOB

10:00 am CACR 17, relating to taxation. Providing that a new state broad-based tax may be enacted only to reduce property taxes. *[NOTE: a CACR is a proposed constitutional amendment. It would appear on the November ballot for a decision by the voters only if it gets 60% support in both House and Senate first.]*

10:45 am HB 1492-FN-A-L, establishing a tax on the retail sale of certain electronic devices to fund education. *[NOTE the fiscal note on this bill states the following: This bill imposes a tax of 4.3 percent upon the receipts from the sale of taxable electronics purchased at retail in this state and directs all revenues collected by the DepT of Revenue Administration from this tax into the Education Trust Fund for Education. The DRA states it is unable to determine the revenue the proposed tax would generate*

because the department does not have reliable data on the volume or price of sales of taxable electronics in the state.]

Thursday, Jan. 16

Education, Room 207, LOB *[League note: League has been studying education issues in NH and we want to learn more about these bills. We have no position on them yet.]*

10:00 am HB 1321, establishing a committee to study the reporting criteria of chartered public schools.

10:30 am HB 1369, relative to the acceptance of high school course credits from certain schools or education agencies.

11:15 am HB 1412, requiring secondary schools to grant educational credit for certain courses completed.

1:00 pm HB 1454, relative to credit for alternative, extended learning, and work-based programs Labor, Industrial, etc., Room 307, LOB

11:00 am HB 1168, commemorating the *first labor strike in the United States* by women. *[In this centennial of women getting the right to vote, we recognize and applaud the women who first began using their civic voices in the textile mill strike in Dover in December 1828, nearly 100 years before women got the vote.]*

Tuesday, Jan. 21

Election Law, Room 308, LOB

10:00 am [HCR 8](#), celebrating August 26, 2020 as the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which guarantees that the right to vote shall not be denied on the basis of sex. *[League of Women Voters, as the direct descendant organization of the National American Woman Suffrage Assn, of course supports this resolution! And we especially thank the first 5 listed sponsors, all current or recent League members, for their sponsorship.]*

10:30 am HB 1191, relative to the use of campaign contributions for personal use expenditures.

11:00 am HB 1643-FN, relative to permissible campaign contributions by business organizations and labor unions and relative to funding source disclosure for political advertising.

1:00 pm HB 1525, relative to the definition of political advocacy organization.

1:30 pm HB 1457-FN-L, requiring election officers and supervisors of the checklist to visit skilled nursing facilities and elderly and disabled residences within their jurisdiction for the purpose of assisting with voter registration and casting absentee ballots. *[Some towns already do this. This law would require these efforts to ensure that nursing home residents have the assistance they need to be able to register and vote. League supports.]*

2:00 pm HB 1534, establishing a commission to study the creation of online voter registration for the 2022 state elections. *[League supports]*

Finance, Division 1, Room 212, LOB

1:00 pm Division work session on SB 8, establishing an independent redistricting commission. *[League supports]*

1:30 pm Division work session on SB 7-FN-L, establishing the secure modern accurate registration act (SMART ACT). *[League supports]*

2:00 pm Division work session on SB 283-FN, relative to post-election audits of electronic ballot counting devices. *(Executive session on some of these will be Feb. 5, starting at 10 am. LOB 210-211.)*

Public Works & Highways, Room 201, LOB

10:00 am HB 1650-FN-A-L, establishing a road usage registration fee and making an appropriation therefor. *[these two bills may get controversial, as they attempt to even out the revenue the state gets to maintain roads, taking into account energy efficient vehicles, etc. League has no position on this.]*

1:15 pm HB 1649-FN-A, establishing a road usage fee and making an appropriation therefor.

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Criminal Justice, Room 204, LOB

10:00 am HB 1254-FN, relative to the parole of prisoners and the procedures of the adult parole board.

11:00 am HB 1112-FN, “requires the administrator of offenders and family services to develop and implement rehabilitation, training, counseling, and education programs for women offenders who are on parole.”

Criminal Justice Rooms 210-211, LOB

1:00 pm HB 1101-FN, imposing a waiting period between the purchase and delivery of a firearm.

2:30 pm HB 1379-FN, requiring a background check for commercial firearms sales.

Election Law Room 308, LOB

10:00 am HB 1395, establishing a committee to study ballot access and ways to improve civic engagement in New Hampshire. *[League supports]*

10:30 am HB 1651-FN, relative to prisoners’ voting rights. *[This bill amends the absentee voting registration form to account for those incarcerated pending trial or serving misdemeanor sentences. It does not grant voting rights beyond those already held; just amends the form. League supports.]*

11:00 am HB 1672-FN, allowing voters to vote by absentee ballot. *[This bill would allow any NH voter to vote by absentee ballot. It is sometimes called “no excuse absentee voting.” League supports]*

1:00 pm HB 1279, relative to the terms resident, inhabitant, residence, and residency. *[This bill would reverse HB1264, which League would like to see happen. But HB1264 is in litigation right now, so this bill is likely to be held pending a court decision.]*

1:30 pm HB 1653-FN, relative to domicile, residency, voter registration, and investigation of voter verification letters. *[This bill would reverse SB3, passed in 2017, which League would like to see happen. But SB3 is in litigation right now, so this bill is likely to be held pending a court decision.]*

Judiciary, Room 208, LOB

1:00 pm CACR 14, relating to reproductive medical decisions. Providing that the state shall not infringe or unduly inconvenience the right of reproductive medical decisions. “This constitutional amendment concurrent resolution provides that the right to make reproductive medical decisions is inviolate and prohibits the state ... from infringing upon or unduly inconveniencing this right.”

State-Federal Relations, Room 206, LOB *[Note: these are all “resolutions” from the state to the federal govt, expressing the views of NH for consideration by Congress.]*

9:30 am HR 12, urging Congress to declare perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAs) a superfund chemical and provide sufficient programming and funding for education, treatment, and remediation of the effects of PFAS.

11:00 am HCR 10, urging Congress to grant states broader authority to set higher environmental standards than those established in federal law.

1:00 pm HJR 4, urging Congress to enact legislation or propose a constitutional amendment to grant statehood to the District of Columbia. *[League at the national level has supported this for years.]*

1:45 pm HR 10, urging the return of armed service members from the Middle East.

2:45 pm HCR 9, rescinding all requests by the New Hampshire legislature for a federal constitutional convention. *[League supports—our national study highlights the “runaway convention” issue.]*

Executive session on some of these will be Jan. 29. starting at 10:30 am.

Thursday, Jan. 23 (no LWV priority hearings or broad public interest bills)

Tuesday, Jan. 28

Criminal Justice, Room 204, LOB

10:00 am Executive session on a number of bills. Check the House Calendar for the list.

Election Law, Room 308, LOB

10:00 am [HB 1531](#), *[This bill relates to the National Popular Vote Compact, which League supports]*

10:30 am HB 1665-FN-A, establishing an independent redistricting commission. *League SUPPORTS !*

11:00 am [HB 1390](#), relative to access to ballots and verification counts of machine-counted ballots.

1:00 pm HB 1403, relative to removing party columns from general election ballots. *[don’t understand this bill]*