

Legislative Report May 11, 2018, from League of Women Voters NH

Some very good news to report from Thursday's House and Senate sessions. Both bodies voted on a number of bills where the version passed in one had been amended in the other. Looks like some of those bills passed when the body voted to "concur" with the other version. Some will go to Committees of Conference (see below). Some were voted "non-concur" without recommendation of Committee of Conference. Here are the two biggies:

SB313, to continue Medicaid for 50,000 low income New Hampshire residents, passed when the Senate concurred 16-6. It passed the House last week and will go to the Governor's desk.

SB193, the school "voucher" bill that was hastily tacked on to another Senate bill when the House voted it to Interim Study last week didn't get very far. The House voted 180-163 on May 10 to "non-concur" with the Senate's scheme and the bill is now dead...but will surely come back in some form next session.

The next House session and the next Senate session will be on Wednesday, May 23 at 10:00 a.m. If action on committee of conference reports is not completed on May 23, the House will also meet on Thursday, May 24.

Committees of Conference: The work on May 23 will be to hear Committees of Conference reports and vote. A good explanation of the Committee of Conference process is on page 2 of this week's House Calendar: http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljournals/calendars/2018/HC_19.pdf

For those who would like to find out who has been appointed to which Committees of Conference and then to see the reports as they are filed, you will find the link to that list on the General Court's homepage, the first bulleted item in the first box. Here is that webpage: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/>

During the Summer: Bills that have been sent to Interim Study may be heard by committees starting in August, most likely. Between now and then, the only committees that will be meeting are the statutory committees and commissions. The Senate and House typically issue Calendars listing those bi-weekly until the new session begins in January.

League will be checking those Calendars and may issue Legislative Alerts from time to time from August to October when our priority committees are meeting or major bills are being studied. We'll take a break now, but we thank you for taking the time to read these alerts, and especially for reaching out to your own representatives and senators on issues important to you.

Shortly the state's focus will shift to the **Fall 2018 elections**. Candidates for county/state/federal office must file by June 16 for the September 11 primaries. If you wish to change your party, in order to vote in another party's primary, be sure to do so before June 5. We also hope that you will encourage your family and neighbors, including those turning 18 and eligible to vote for the first time, to register. Information on how to register, including how to prove domicile, is on the Secretary of State's website: <http://sos.nh.gov/HowRegVote.aspx>

Candidate forums: The League of Women Voters, as a non-partisan organization with a long history of organizing and moderating candidate forums, is always available to advise local groups that want to hold forums locally. We also maintain a webpage listing any candidate forums of which we have

knowledge. Please let us know when a forum is scheduled in your area and we will post it. Or email us to set up a time to discuss how you can organize a forum in your area. Our website is LWVNH.org

Even before the official filing period, the first forum for NH's Congressional candidates has been organized by two groups concerned about big money in politics, one conservative and one liberal. Details below in their press release.

Hear What New Hampshire's Congressional Candidates Have to Say About Campaign Reform Take Back Our Republic and Open Democracy Action Will Host Bipartisan Candidates' Forum

The national conservative campaign reform group **Take Back Our Republic** is teaming up with **Open Democracy Action** to host a **bipartisan candidates' forum on Monday, May 14 starting at 1:00 pm** in the Rich Room of the **Warren B. Rudman Center at UNH School of Law** (2 White Street, Concord NH 03301). *register online:* http://www.opendemocracynh.org/congressional_candidates_forum_on_campaign_reform?utm_campaign=congressional_candidates_forum&utm_medium=email&utm_source=nhrebellion

The forum will be preceded by a **light lunch, starting at 12:30 pm**, to allow candidates an opportunity to talk one-on-one with audience members. The audience will include members of both organizations. Open Democracy Action, based in New Hampshire, includes more than 20,000 members; Take Back Our Republic, based in Auburn, Alabama, has almost 50,000 members nationwide and about 800 in the Granite State.

All of New Hampshire's congressional candidates – from both districts – have been invited to share their positions on campaign reform and take questions from the audience. To date, 8 candidates are confirmed to participate in the forum: **Naomi Andrews, Brian Belanger, Mark MacKenzie, Andy Martin, Douglas McEachern, Mindi Messmer, Terrance O'Rourke, and Chris Pappas.**

“The myth that ‘conservatives do not want reform’ was countered with the South Dakota vote to end secret political contributions and gifts the night President Trump won that state 62% to 32%,” said Take Back Executive Director **John Pudner**. “Following that victory with Tuesday’s vote to end gerrymandering in Ohio, after it swung so hard Republican, shows conservatives are willing to vote for essential elements of reform.”

“Our system of privately financing our federal elections significantly limits our search for the leaders of our nation to those with wealth, the access to wealth, or a famous name. It also allows special interests to use their wealth to influence policy, whereas in a healthy democracy it is imperative that the voices of voters be heard and their perspectives considered,” said **John Rauh**, who founded Americans for Campaign Reform and is Chair of Open Democracy.

"Our great nation will not tackle crushing debt and healthcare spending, failing military strategy or climate change until candidates for high office can run competitive elections without selling themselves to big-money special interests," said **Jim Rubens**, a Republican who ran for U.S. Senate in 2014 and 2016.

All parts of the event are open to the press and public, free of charge. The forum will be moderated by John Pudner.

The [latest state poll](#) found that 80% of voters – including 79% of Democrats, 74% of Republicans, and 85% of Independents – believe “big money” is a problem in New Hampshire elections. Only 14% believe voters have more influence than special interests.

The [latest national poll](#) found that 76% of voters – including 71% of Republicans and 84% of Democrats – believe government “is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves” (only 21% believe government “is run for the benefit of all the people”). Voters are looking for change: 65% think that new campaign finance laws could be effective in limiting the amount of money in political campaigns.