

Legislative Alert May 7-11, 2018 from League of Women Voters NH

To League members and others in the Seacoast area:

Honorable John Lewis will be giving a talk at the Durham Public Library regarding school funding on **May 9th**, beginning at 6:15 pm. His talk, among other things about the Claremont litigation, will include how NH is presently funding our schools, and what is going on in other states regarding school funding. Lewis is a retired NH Superior Court Judge, former Chair of the NH State Board of Education. Presently he works as an attorney, performs ADR (alternative dispute resolution) services, and teaches.

First, an update on bills passed or defeated in the House and Senate on May 2 & 3. These are bills we highlighted in last week's Legislative Alert:

SB193, the school “voucher” bill, was sent to Interim Study by a House vote of 170-159. **But...late on Thursday, May 3, in the Senate** the wording of the original SB193, passed by the Senate in 2017, was added to another bill—we *hate these non-germane amendments and believe they should be abolished!* The bill deals with charter schools, and this is just a shenanigan move by voucher supporters in the Senate for a further reconsideration of vouchers. Read the full description of what happened at this link: <https://anhpe.org/2018/05/04/update-on-the-effort-to-resuscitate-sb-193-action-through-the-end-of-the-session/> The bill to look for now is **HB1636**, likely to be on the May 10 House agenda. So the fight to keep public funds from diversion to private schools goes on! Text of this mishmash of bill can be found at this link: http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billText.aspx?sy=2018&txtFormat=html&v=SA2&id=1609

SB313, the continuation of Medicaid for 50,000 low income families, was passed on a voice vote in the House. [*League is tempted to put smiley faces in here, but will refrain.*]

SB438, the bill to define procedures in case of storms or dangerous roads that necessitate **postponement of town elections**—our own fault for scheduling town meetings in March in NH!-- passed with the floor amendment that allows for local decision making, 178-158. *A good outcome for local control.* Secretary of State retains postponement power over state/federal elections.

SB527, regarding absentee ballots, passed the House on a voice vote with an additional category of absentee eligibility in the event of storm warning, plus an amendment to protect the voters' privacy. *A good outcome.* See p. 6 of the amendment to understand the additional absentee eligibility. http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billtext.aspx?sy=2018&txtFormat=amend&id=2018-1656H

HB1264, an innocuous sounding bill that would likely **suppress voter registration** among students and professionals living in NH for an indefinite time period, passed 14-10 along party lines in the Senate, but was amended to delay implementation until 2019. It's evil twin, HB372, has already passed. [*Our hope is that the Governor will remain true to his word and veto both of these voter suppression bills.*]

HB1319, prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity, passed the Senate 14-10 (not party lines) [*A civil rights victory.*]

SB383, establishing a commission to recommend policies that would enhance access to **affordable healthcare for all**, House voted Inexpedient to Legislate 170-164.

CACR 15, providing that taxpayers have standing to bring actions against the government, passed the Senate 22-2. It already passed the House 309-9, does not need the Governor's signature. This proposed Constitutional Amendment will be on the November ballot, will need 2/3 vote to be enacted.

CACR 16, Providing that an individual's right to live free of governmental intrusion is natural, essential, and inherent, passed the Senate 15-9. It had already passed in the House 235-96, with an amendment. Will be on the November ballot, will need 2/3 vote to be enacted.

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/billText.aspx?sy=2018&txtFormat=html&v=HA&id=1656

The House will next meet in session on May 10 at 10 am. The House will also be in session on May 23 and May 24 (if necessary).

The Senate will next meet in session on May 10 at 10 am. Probably also May 23 and maybe 24. May 10 is the deadline to form Committees of Conference to reconcile (or not) bills passed in different versions by the House and Senate. An explanation of the process is on p. 6 of the House Calendar. Be prepared to read it slowly. http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/caljourns/calendars/2018/HC_18.pdf

Neither the House nor the Senate Calendar lists bills for May 10. Instead each body will take up bills that need to go to Committees of Conference—we think. This includes HB1636, which now contains the outdated version of SB193. *Yes, League is struggling to understand all this too.*

Thursday, May 17, 2018 Deadline to SIGN Committee of Conference Reports.

Thursday, May 24, 2018 Deadline to ACT on Committee of Conference Reports.

Friday, October 26, 2018 Last day to file 2018 Interim Study reports –*When League is able to determine meeting dates of major Interim Study work sessions, probably beginning in August, we will send short Legislative Alerts. These work sessions are open to the public.*

Because most of the work will be done by the Committees of Conference, the regular committees will not be meeting, with the following exceptions.

The following House committees will be meeting:

TUESDAY, MAY 8

HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND ELDERLY AFFAIRS, Room 205, LOB

1:00 p.m. Full committee work session on bills amended by the Senate.

JUDICIARY, Room 208, LOB

10:00 a.m. Full committee work session on bills amended by the Senate.

WAYS AND MEANS, Room 202, LOB Presentations:

10:00 a.m. Department of Revenue Administration

1:00 p.m. Liquor and Lottery Commission

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9

FINANCE, Rooms 210-211, LOB

10:00 a.m. Full committee work session on bills amended by the Senate.

TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2018

COMMITTEE TO STUDY EDUCATION FUNDING AND THE COST OF AN OPPORTUNITY FOR AN ADEQUATE EDUCATION Chapter 190:1, 2017 (joint House/Senate statutory committee)

10:00 a.m. Room 209, LOB Regular Meeting League will attend.

For future action: If the Governor vetoes the **death penalty repeal bill** recently passed by the House and Senate, a reversal of two senators and 37 representatives would be needed to override a veto. But if the Governor's veto holds, New Hampshire will stay among the 31 states whose capital punishment law remains on the books, even though we have no death chamber nor any drugs to administer the lethal injection specified in NH statute. Opponents of the death penalty, whether on moral/ethical or fiscal grounds, should be prepared to ask the Governor NOT to veto the bill. If that fails, keep pressure on legislators to override his veto.