

This Week's Issue:

Republicans Remain United	1
Republican Leader Comments on Dems' Surprise Amendment	2
In Case You Missed It	3
Op-Ed: NH House Dems Plan to Raise Taxes	3

HOUSE REPUBLICANS REMAIN UNITED ON VOTES AGAINST MEDICAID EXPANSION

House Dems manage to ram through bill despite objections on process and procedure

House Democrats surprised House Republicans last week when they sought to attach their Medicaid Expansion bill onto HB544, which originally repealed the prohibition of state-based health exchanges. NH Democrats' proposal expands Medicaid under the "Affordable" Care Act (aka ObamaCare) but without thoughtful and reasonable financial safeguards.

What the Democrats passed is an expansion of an out-of-control Obamacare Medicaid entitlement program. House Republicans had only 2 days to read through the Democrats' proposal, which is significantly different than the legislation that passed the House during the special session in November. Attaching such an expansive piece of legislation to an unrelated bill and ramming it through the House is not the New Hampshire way.

Key vote analysis:

ITL HB544 - 165-178

100% of Republicans voted to kill HB544.

Divide Sections 1-8 - 160-183

100% of Republicans voted for the division.

Floor Amendment 0025h - 185-155

99% of Republicans voted against the amendment.

OTP/A HB544 - 182-154

100% of Republicans voted against the bill.

Important Upcoming Dates & Events

- Wednesday, January 15, 2014 – Republican Caucus- 9am- LOB 305-307
- Wednesday, January 15, 2014 – House Session 10am
- Friday, January 17, 2014 – 2014 Financial Disclosure Forms due

House Republican Leader Comments on House Democrats' Surprise Medicaid Expansion Amendment

CONCORD - House Republican Leader Gene Chandler offered the following statement in reaction to the [op-ed by House Speaker Terie Norelli](#) (D-Portsmouth) published over the weekend. In the op-ed the Speaker indicated that House Democrats would offer an amendment to a retained 2013 bill that would include Medicaid Expansion legislation. Language of the amendment has not been released.

House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett)

“House Democrats have again chosen to ram this significant policy change through with little or no debate. This is one of, if not the largest expansion of a government entitlement program the New Hampshire legislature has ever faced. Attaching such an expansive piece of legislation to an unrelated bill is not the right way to approach any issue, much less something of this scale. On Wednesday, the House will be asked to vote on an amendment. There will be no public hearing or opportunity for public input. It’s unfair to our Representatives and to our constituents. This is not how we should do things in New Hampshire.”

“Why this surprise amendment is even necessary is beyond me. Democrats will have a bill in the 2014 session that will address the same issue, and we will have an opportunity to thoroughly debate the merits of the policy. We see enough of this type of politics from Washington and we don’t need it here in New Hampshire. New Hampshire citizens deserve better.”

“There are many issues and questions still unanswered regarding Medicaid expansion. [One recent study](#) showed that in Oregon emergency room use by those covered under expanded Medicaid increased by 40%; exactly the opposite of what we have been told would be a reduction in these types of uses. This is just one example of why New Hampshire should take the time to have a thorough debate on this evolving issue so we can come up with the right answer for New Hampshire.”

Sen. Bradley Statement on House Passage of Medicaid Expansion Legislation

Concord, NH – Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley, R-Wolfeboro, issued the following statement today after the House of Representatives passed a new Medicaid Expansion plan with no public hearing as an amendment to an unrelated bill.

“At the end of the special session, political attacks undermined the opportunity for bi-partisan cooperation to help low income New Hampshire citizens obtain private health insurance. The decision by House Democrats to fast-track without a public hearing Washington’s ObamaCare entitlement expansion again undermines the opportunity for bi-partisan cooperation on what is a very complex and costly issue.

“Increasing access to high-quality, affordable, private insurance for low-income New Hampshire residents remains a top priority for Senators of both parties. We will continue to work through this process deliberately and carefully to ensure that any proposal is crafted in the best interest of New Hampshire’s hardworking taxpayers, health care providers, and patients. Should the Senate reach a compromise New Hampshire solution on this issue, it will move through the usual legislative process as a Senate bill with a public hearing and adequate time for open debate.”

ICYMI: House Republican Leader Comments on Budget Surplus

CONCORD – New Hampshire House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett) released the following statement in response to the New Hampshire General and Education Trust Fund Surplus Statement that announced a \$72 million surplus from fiscal year 2013, part of the budget passed by the Republican legislative majority in 2011.

House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett)

“The budget passed in 2011 was based on realistic revenue estimates and sound fiscal management through spending and tax reforms that helped keep New Hampshire on solid footing through tough economic times. As a result, the original projected deficit of \$800 million turned into a surplus of \$72 million. Thankfully, the budget that was passed this year mirrors those important provisions, including no new taxes and fees, which Republicans fought for throughout the budget process.”

“With the good news of \$15 million more than was originally projected in June, I urge caution. We must not rush into spending this money and show the same fiscal responsibility we have in the past. These surplus funds should be set aside for future emergencies, and not spent on the unnecessary expansion of government.”

ICYMI: House Overturns Committee Report on Charter School Funding

Wednesday the House overturned the Education committee report of ITL on HB435-FN, a bill that would increase the amount of funding charter schools would receive from the state per pupil. HB435 increases the per-pupil aid to 50%.

The vote on the committee report of ITL failed 132-169. The motion of OTP passed the House 177-124.

HB435 will now move on to House Finance.

Coming Up Next Week:

HB675- authorizing the use of license plate scanning devices

HB562- relative to the interest rate of title loans

HB492- legalization and regulation of marijuana

HB474- eligibility for in-state tuition rates at the university system of New Hampshire

HB660- require labeling for genetically modified foods

HB110- requiring persons to report cruelty to livestock

HB485- establishing keno

NH House Democrats plan to raise taxes, increase regulations

By: Rep. Laurie Sanborn (R-Bedford)

Democratic House Speaker Norelli’s plans for growing the economy, as stated in her column in the Jan. 5 New Hampshire Sunday News, involve more taxpayer-funded spending, more regulations and costs imposed on New Hampshire employers, higher taxes and unnecessary expansion of government and its intrusion into our daily lives.

Republicans have a different way to grow the New Hampshire economy, encourage job creation and keep youth in our state. And it doesn’t involve you paying more taxes.

At the top of Speaker Norelli’s list is expanding Obamacare in our state, and she will impose it on the Legislature again, right away, this Wednesday. You may remember that the option of expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act was left up to the states by the U.S. Supreme Court, and nearly half of the states in the nation have rejected it.

(continued on page 4...)

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NH House Democrats plan to raise taxes, increase regulations (cont.)

Those that have accepted it have seen their costs skyrocket well beyond projections. An academic study by an MIT economist showed that participants in expanded Medicaid dramatically increase utilization of expensive emergency rooms, while health outcomes don't improve.

To expand Medicaid under Obamacare now, knowing that cuts to Medicaid reimbursements have already repeatedly been on the table, puts our state in precarious financial position — now and especially in three years when the federal government forces us to pay 10 percent. Since this is estimated at \$40 million per year but will undoubtedly be more, the government will need to raise significant additional taxes on New Hampshire residents and businesses. This will not help our economy.

The Speaker also states her goals of increasing the minimum wage and increasing restrictions on the hiring decisions of employers. Raising the minimum wage will have a major and disproportionate impact on small businesses, the backbone of New Hampshire's economy. This will have the effect of reducing hiring and growth, not increasing it. Since the minimum wage is generally paid to young workers, this will hurt, not help, those who are looking for entry-level jobs the most.

The Speaker also wants to use every penny of the \$15 million surplus from last year, instead of shoring up our woefully small state rainy day fund. If our "crystal ball" revenue projections for some reason don't pan out, or if we have a major catastrophe in our state, how will we pay our bills and take care of people who really need our help?

House Republicans have a different approach. We believe that now is certainly not the time to be raising taxes or expanding Obamacare. Instead, we will focus on making the economy better and health insurance more affordable for all people. We can do this by offering more choices for customers, fewer mandates, and fewer barriers. Many of the people who would be covered with Medicaid under Obamacare are already eligible for heavily subsidized insurance through the federal exchange.

New Hampshire House Republicans will continue our efforts to ensure that everyone has excellent employment opportunities by fostering a vibrant business climate — one that eliminates excessive and unnecessary regulation, encourages responsible business success, makes us more attractive than other states and protects taxpayers by reducing wasteful spending.

We know that when we do this, we grow the economy, can pay for necessary government services and help those most in need without raising taxes.