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Legislative Alert: HB 1589

On Wednesday, February 12th, the House of Representatives will vote on HB1589, a poorly written bill that would send New Hampshire down wrong path by restricting the 2nd amendment rights of law abiding citizens and criminalizing common-place activity.

HB1589 attempts to solve a non-existent problem in New Hampshire. New Hampshire is consistently rated among the safest states in the Nation and consistently ranks among the lowest in gun related violence.

1 in 3 New Hampshire households own firearms. We all know the vast majority of gun owners in New Hampshire are honest, law abiding citizens. HB 1589 would make some of these individuals criminals by outlawing certain private sales or transfers if no background check is performed.

No one wants guns the hands of those with criminal intent or those who may be mentally unfit, but this bill is an excessive overreach. Criminals will always find ways to circumvent this law as they do other laws. This bill will not prevent crime and does little more than chip away at our constitutional rights.

House Republican Leader Reacts to the State of the State Address

CONCORD - House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett) offered the following statement in reaction to Gov. Hassan's State of the State Address:

House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett)

"Growing government, increasing spending, expanding entitlement programs and increasing mandates is not the answer to growing our economy. What we heard from Governor Hassan today involved lots of big ideas, but little on specifics and little on how to pay for them. Republicans are committed to moving New Hampshire forward in a measured, responsible manner that does not involve asking for more from our working families and small businesses. I don't see a way that Governor Hassan can achieve her goals without further burdening taxpayers, multiplying mandates, and increasing red tape."

Important Upcoming Dates & Events

- Wednesday, February 12 – Republican Caucus- 9am- LOB 305-307
- Wednesday, February 12 – House Session – 10am
- Thursday, February 13 – Report on House bills going to a 2nd committee
- Monday, February 17 – President's Day, Republican Office Closed

Sen. Sanborn: Equal Pay Law works in New Hampshire but we can make it clearer

Paying women less than men for the same job is illegal. New Hampshire has required equal pay since 1947, nearly two decades before the federal government passed its laws on the issue.

New Hampshire employers should also be congratulated for their overall compliance on this issue. We have and continue to lead America in the overall closing of wage gaps and, due to the commitment in this state, ensuring equality. In fact, there have been no convictions I can find under our state equal pay statute over the last 20 years. But that doesn't mean I think we have all the data we need to ensure our commitment to pay fairness.

Democratic Sen. Sylvia Larsen of Concord has sponsored a bill to review New Hampshire's equal pay statute, and last week I chaired a hearing on SB 207 in the Senate Commerce Committee.

It was one of the most productive public hearings we've had since I've been in the Senate.

We found a lot of common ground on the issue and both recognized some reasons it is hard to definitely understand or put the issue to rest. Our state government has not been that good at keeping the type of data we need to accurately assess how the statute is working.

The New Hampshire attorney general's office hasn't tracked complaints or violations under the law. The Labor Department knows of only three investigations in the past 20 years, all of which were dismissed when employers showed legitimate reasons for a disparity in pay between employees. The New Hampshire Human Rights Commission has two open cases but hasn't kept track of how many complaints it has handled over the years.

We need to know more about wages in New Hampshire and whether complaints filed under the equal pay law are being addressed properly.

Our state departments can also do a better job informing the public of employee rights. We shouldn't need legislation to get our state websites updated, but if that's what it takes, we'll do it.

In researching this bill, I had a hard time finding reliable information on the pay gap in New Hampshire. The only information presented was an aggregate of average wages for all male and female workers. While that shows there is a difference, we need to be able to drill down and examine the differences much more closely. The best resource I found was a detailed survey from the New Hampshire Bar Association's Gender Equality Committee. The Bar has been tracking gender differences with the legal profession since the 1990s, and this report demonstrates the complexity in closing that gap.

Additionally, state and federal laws appear to overlap and contradict each other. Multiple agencies have jurisdiction, and so none are accountable. Employees don't know how or where to file a complaint, whether it should be a gender discrimination claim or equal pay, or whether they should go to a state office or to federal court. We should take this opportunity to make it clear that equal pay is the law in New Hampshire, and we will enforce it.

Workers should know the protections they have in the New Hampshire workplace, and they should know where they can turn for help.

I look forward to working with Larsen and my colleagues on the Senate Commerce Committee to update and improve New Hampshire's equal pay law.

Charlie Arlinghaus: A minimum wage hike will hurt low-income Granite Staters

Proposals at the state and national levels to increase the minimum wage will hurt the job market, decrease the number of jobs available, and hurt the people advocates say they are trying to help.

Specifically, the higher wage will make it more expensive to hire entry-level workers, and it will reduce opportunities for lower-skill workers trying to build job experience.

The current federal and state minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. It is a minimum that affects few employees. Nationally, only 2.7 percent of all wage-and-salary workers earn the minimum or less (1.2 percent of workers are at the minimum while 1.5 percent have jobs that can legally pay less than the minimum, such as golf caddy, outside sales or farm labor).

Economists are paraded about by both sides to advocate for and against and to discuss the effects. A 2007 National Bureau of Economic Research paper reviewing the literature found "a lack of consensus about the overall effects on low-wage employment." But lest you think the research is completely up in the air, the authors noted that "the studies that focus on the least-skilled groups provide relatively overwhelming evidence of stronger disemployment effects for these groups."

This evidence is not hard to understand. The minimum wage is not a wage people expect to make for the rest of their lives. It is not a permanent wage. In fact, two-thirds of minimum wage workers earn a raise within a year; the majority of them see wages increase by 24 percent or more.

(Continued on pg 4...)

CBO: More bad news for Obamacare

In a [recent report](#) published by the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, it is predicted that the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare, will kill roughly 2.5 million jobs over the next 10 years. This report is twice the number the CBO had originally anticipated.

The report also claims that the botched Obamacare roll out will result in roughly 6 million people signing up through the HealthCare Exchanges. This number is 1 million less than what was projected last year.

February 12th Session Outlook

What's coming up next week in the NH House?

- HB1232- relative to insurance filing fees
- HB1589- requiring background checks for all firearms sales
- HB1255- making students whose name appears on a voter checklist eligible for in-state tuition
- HB1433- authorizing the community college system to waive tuition fees for employees & employees' dependents
- HB1579- prohibiting the use of certain leghold or foothold traps for the taking of animals
- HB1616- making changes to the therapeutic cannabis laws
- HB1375- permitting a municipal law enforcement agency to collect unwanted/illegal firearms
- HB1142- relative to the road toll for alternative fuels
- HB1237- prohibiting residency restrictions for registered sex offenders
- HB1509- including nonprofit charitable enterprises in the business enterprise tax and lowering the rate of the tax

I would like to thank Reps. Dan McGuire, Deb DeSimone, and Mary Griffin for their memorials of Reps. Stretch Kennedy, Natalie Flanagan, and Don Stritch on the House floor last week. These representatives, who we have recently lost, were strong Republican votes for many years in the New Hampshire House, and they will be greatly missed.

A minimum wage hike will hurt low-income Granite Staters (continued from pg. 3)

Two-thirds of minimum wage workers are part-time, and the majority are young, under the age of 25. In fact, most of us started in a minimum wage job. Data show that 55 percent of American workers started at or near the minimum wage. Your own experience is probably similar. My early jobs were both below minimum age and at the minimum wage.

Supporters suggest that an increase in the minimum would not reduce or affect the jobs available. Common sense and the preponderance of research suggest this isn't true.

We would all agree that doubling or tripling the minimum wage would naturally reduce the number of jobs available. A company that can afford a small number of employees at \$7.25 per hour will have fewer employees for fewer hours if we make it pay \$15 or \$21 per hour. Companies, already reluctant to add jobs because of economic uncertainty, will add fewer jobs and cut back hours.

Mandated minimums can be thought of as the price of hiring. If you make the price of hiring labor higher, an employer will hire less of it than he otherwise would. A smaller increase will have a smaller effect, but it will have an effect.

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The people most affected by minimum wage increases are people entering the job market. For most of us, our first entry into the market is through a minimum wage job — that first job through which we gain the valuable experience of having a job, getting a start doing something, being supervised, working specific hours at someone else's direction. That entry is invaluable.

Raising the price of entry means there will be fewer opportunities. Remember that 21 percent of teenagers paid hourly earn the minimum wage, but only 3 percent of hourly workers ages 25 and over do. Obviously, the minimum wage is best thought of, for most workers, as the entry gate into the labor market.

Thought of this way, raising the minimum wage hurts the people advocates most want to help. We want more workers to have an opportunity to enter the market and start building the experience needed to get their second job. We want more workers to start the process of having a beginning job, moving to an intermediate job, and then to a more advanced job.

Increasing the price of entry-level jobs will reduce the number of them. For a worker whose job isn't downsized, he or she will see more money initially. But for many more workers and potential workers, their potential position won't be created, their hours will be reduced, or their jobs will be eliminated.

New Hampshire needs more jobs, not fewer. Entry-level workers need greater opportunities. Raising the minimum wage will satisfy politicians who don't understand economics, but it will hurt the very people they are pretending to help.