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## House Republican Leader Comments on House Approval of Gas Tax Increase

CONCORD - House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett) offered the following comments relative to the House vote on SB367, a bill that would, in part, raise the gas tax by 23%. The bill passed by a vote of 193-141.

### House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett)

“Whether or not you support the concept of a gas tax increase, there are many problems with SB367. With all due respect to the bill and its supporters, before jumping into one of the largest tax increases in recent history, we should have taken a more detailed look at the system by which the revenue would be used, and reform that system before pumping any more money into it.”

“In the last 2 budgets alone, \$38 million has been diverted from the highway fund in excess of the allowable amount in RSA 9:9-b. SB367 may state that the new revenue can only be used for specific purposes, but if the legislature can't even follow a reasonable standing law regarding highway funds, how can we say that the provision in SB367 won't be disregarded or suspended for future budget years?”

“Also, this bill, as written, removes tolls in Merrimack, which results in a loss of revenue to the Turnpike Fund. Contrary to popular belief, this new revenue does not all go to local road improvement. It allocates 42% of revenue to the I-93 widening project. The I-93 widening was already allocated \$50 million as part of the 10 Year Highway Plan.”

“Folks that were hoping for immediate relief for their local roads will be disappointed. Municipal block grants will not commence until FY2016 and will be just 12% of the prior years' revenue. In FY2016, additional aid to towns and cities resulting from the tax increase will be just \$4 million per year statewide. Once divided up, most NH towns will get <1% of that amount. Larger cities and towns may get 1%-6%. Once they receive the grants, towns are not required to spend their block grant on infrastructure repair.”

## Important Dates & Events

<b>04/30/2014</b>	Republican Caucus – 9am LOB 305-307
<b>04/30/2014</b>	House Session – 10am
<b>05/08/2014</b>	Last Day to report on all remaining Senate Bills
<b>05/15/2014</b>	Last Day to act on all remaining Senate Bills
<b>06/16/2014</b>	Committee to Elect House Republicans Golf Tournament

## House Republican Leader Reacts to S&P Downgrade of State Bond Rating

CONCORD - House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett) today offered the following reaction to Standard & Poor's recent report (attached) revising the outlook from stable to negative on New Hampshire's general obligation and state-guaranteed bonds citing, "Relatively low reserves, with a rainy day fund balance of less than 1% of expenditures," and, "Low pension funding level, currently 56.7%, well below that of most other states, which we believe could result in additional pressure on future budgets, " in addition to concern over the recent Medicaid Enhancement Tax court rulings.

### House Republican Leader Gene Chandler (R-Bartlett)

"We were warned by our State Treasurer in January that without a significant change in policy in regards to our Rainy Day fund, we could see our credit rating drop. While this is not the sole factor in the ratings change, it does compound the problem and affects our ability to address potentially major issues like what we face with the recent Medicaid Enhancement Tax court rulings."

"When situations like this occur, even though we realize it will not cover the whole shortfall, it is important to have a reserve account that can significantly offset the impact. NH's rainy day account holds only 0.7% of unrestricted general fund revenue. This is why it is important that we pass SB415 as soon as possible to ensure last year's surplus is saved and not spent, and will be there for us in the event of a revenue emergency. Even if the MET issue is resolved, this is a prime example of why having sufficient funds in reserve is the responsible thing to do."

"Republicans have and will continue to put forward reasonable proposals to help address the massive unfunded liability in our pension system. Unfortunately, our efforts in the House this year to study alternatives to our current broken system have been dismissed by the Democratic leadership."

## ICYMI [In Case You Missed It]

### House passes 23% increase in the state's gas tax

On Wednesday the House passed a 4.2 cent increase in the state's gas tax. The bill not only increases the gas tax, but removes the Exit 12 toll booth in Merrimack. The removing of the toll is a legislative special project and should not have become part of a tax bill.

NH citizens will also be disappointed to hear that not all of this revenue will go to fixing local roads and bridges. 42% of this revenue will go to the I-93 widening project. If NH citizens are going to be subject to a tax hike, they deserve no less than a full guarantee that all the proceeds from that tax will go to their intended use.

SB 367 passed the House 193-141 and will now go to Governor Hassan's desk to sign. NH can expect to see higher prices at the pumps starting July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Oregon dumps its own exchange, goes for federal exchange

After months of trying to get its problem-plagued online health exchange to work, Oregon on Friday officially gave up on the state portal and decided to switch to the federal website.

Officials say it would have cost \$87 million to fix the website. This is in addition to the \$134 million the state paid for the design and construction of the broken site.

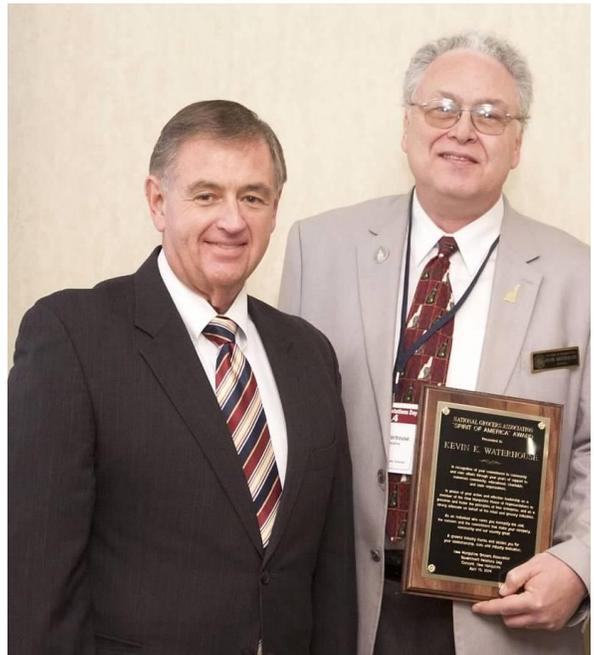
New Hampshire smartly didn't go down the road of a state based exchange. And despite the problems of healthcare.gov, would should be pretty satisfied that we have not (yet) spent tens of millions of dollars for something worse.

Let's keep NH out of the exchange business!

## Rep. Waterhouse Wins American Spirit Award

Members of the statewide trade association for New Hampshire's grocers recently held their Annual Meeting in Concord NH. During the program, it was announced that retail grocer Kevin Waterhouse, a member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives had been selected as this year's recipient of the Spirit of America Award.

The Spirit of America Award was initiated in 1982 by the National Grocers Association. The prestigious award is given to honor individuals who have provided leadership and distinction in the areas of community service and government relations on behalf of the independent retail and wholesale industry food industry.



Do you have news and photos about awards and/or community involvement?  
Email them to [houserepublicans@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:houserepublicans@leg.state.nh.us)

### House Session Action

Included below is a recap of the action taken on a number of Senate bills by the House on Wednesday:

**SB 215**, authorizing benefit corporations. Passed (216-101)

**SB 367**, requiring adjustment of the road toll according to changes in the CPI, eliminating certain ramp tolls on the Everett turnpike in the town of Merrimack, and establishing a committee to study the effectiveness and efficiency of DOT. Passed (193-141)

**SB 204**, relative to a benefit for certain medical conditions covered by workers' compensation and establishing a commission to study soft tissue injuries under workers' compensation and to study the feasibility of developing a first responders' critical injury fund. Passed (211-111)

**SB 207**, relative to paycheck equity. Passed (187-134)

**SB 325**, relative to oil spill preparedness and response. Passed (186-104)

**SB 245**, relative to the siting of energy facilities. Passed (227-69)

### Senate Session Action

The Senate met on Thursday where they voted on a number of House bills. Below are a list of attention grabbing bills and their outcome.

**HB1606**, relative to assignment of legal costs in suits between condominium associations and condominium members. Passed (Voice Vote)

**HB1532**, relative to notification of radon and arsenic levels. Passed (Voice Vote)

**HB1503**, relative to the penalties for negligent homicide and manslaughter causing a miscarriage or stillbirth and relative to miscarriage or stillbirth in second degree murder cases. Tabled (21-2)

**HB1533**, requiring a warrant to search information in a portable electronic device. Passed (Voice Vote)

**HB1548**, eliminating separate penalties for crack cocaine. Interim Study (Voice Vote)

## Note from the Republican Leader:

House Republicans,

Last year we sent you a list of how the Democrats voted on key bills. With the 2014 election approaching, we will soon be sending you an updated version of this list that includes key bills from the 2014 House Session.

In the 2014 session we have seen Democrats push their liberal agenda that hurts businesses and the taxpayers of New Hampshire with their talking points coming straight from Washington. The Democrats are proving time and time again that they are out of touch with NH's residents, forcing one size fits all policies on New Hampshire just because it's part of the White House agenda.

We took some of the most egregious bills that the Democrats tried to push through the legislature, along with some common sense Republican bills that they made sure to kill. We hope that you will find the information helpful in your campaigns.

*Gene G. Chandler*

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WENTWORTH  
BY THE SEA  
COUNTRY CLUB

We are excited to announce that Rep. Gene G. Chandler and the Committee to Elect House Republicans will be hosting their golf tournament on Monday, June 16th at Wentworth by the Sea, Rye, NH.

Registration is at 12noon, tee off is at 1pm, and the cost is \$150 per player. For more information, please visit:

[www.electhouserepublicans.com](http://www.electhouserepublicans.com)

## House Session Preview

Here's a look at what is coming up in House Session on Wednesday

**SB 205**, relative to the use of metal detection devices at supervised visitation centers and establishing a commission to study supervised visitation centers.

**SB 91**, relative to drug use not approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

**SB 317**, relative to trafficking in persons.

**SB 318**, establishing the crime of domestic violence.

**CACR 17**, relating to natural rights. Providing that discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited.

**SB 394**, relative to the recognition of out of state marriages, uniform marriage recognition law, civil union recognition, and gender neutral references.

**SB 366**, relative to video lottery and table gaming.