

Republican Review

A Publication of the New Hampshire House Majority Office

Fiscal Committee Republicans Critical of Plan to Plug DHHS Budget Hole

\$7 million to be Diverted From Payments to Nursing Homes to Cover Overspending

Last week, we updated readers about the potential for a large budget deficit as a result of overspending in the executive branch, primarily in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Updated information was released this week, when DHHS provided their [latest dashboard](#) that showed a \$58 million operating deficit as of November 31, 2014.

Included in the report were a list of proposals DHHS identified as ways to fill that gap by the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2015). Among the proposals was a “restriction” in payments to nursing home Medicaid providers.

Many House members have received correspondence from nursing homes in their district about a DHHS proposal that would lower rates for services they provide. When asked by Fiscal Committee Republicans why nursing home payments were targeted, Commissioner Toumpas replied that it was an “executive decision,” and that the Governor had approved the nursing home payment cut.

This is a downshifting of costs to property tax payers to cover overspending. We’ll keep you updated as this develops.

What the press is saying on twitter:

[@kyronayne](#): HHS commissioner says [@GovernorHassan](#) approved plan to cut \$7 million from nursing home payments

[@amorrisNH](#): Public nursing home officials said ystyday cut to medicaid rates will likely mean downshifting of costs to local property tax payers

Speaker Jasper Makes Deep Cuts



Happy Birthday, Mr. Speaker! January 23 is Speaker Shawn Jasper’s 56th birthday. Staff and House colleagues celebrated on Thursday with cake, which he ceremonially cut.

STAT OF THE WEEK

\$21.4 million

the amount of over-budget spending on increased traditional Medicaid caseloads at DHHS as a result of federal changes in Medicaid eligibility.

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IMPORTANT DATES

January 28- House Continuing Education

January 30- Last day to introduce House Bills & Last day to amend House Rules by a majority vote

February 12- Last day to report HB's going to a second committee

February 19- Last day to act on HB's going to a second committee

February 23-27- Break Week

March 5- Last day to report all HBs not in a second committee, except budget bills

March 12- Last day to act on all HBs not in a second committee, except budget bills

March 19- Last day to report all HBs, except budget bills & last day to report list of retrained bills

UPCOMING BILL HEARINGS

Here are some of the bill hearings coming up next week:

HB356, exempting persons using private virtual currencies for internet commerce from the licensing requirements for money transmitters.

HB262, relative to criteria for classification as a tier III sex offender.

HB263, prohibiting residency restrictions for sex offenders.

HB276, providing that school districts shall not be required to adopt the common core standards.

HB228, relative to showing or specially marking a ballot.

HB219, relative to the use of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards.

HB365, prohibiting an employer from using credit history in employment decisions.

HOUSE CONTINUING EDUCATION

Tools every legislator needs

TOPICS:

Parliamentary Procedure: *Mastering the Rules*

Parliamentary Inquiries: *Do's and Don'ts*

Decorum and Debate: *Proper floor etiquette*

Constituent Services: *Serving your constituents*

Working with the Media: *Getting your message across*

Getting Bills Passed: *Being an effective legislator*

DATE: Wednesday, January 28

TIME: 10:00am – 3:00pm

PLACE: Representatives Hall

Coordinators: Rep. Dick Hinch & Rep. Steve Shurtleff

*Lunch will be provided by SkiNH

DAILY NEWS CLIPS DELIVERED BY EMAIL

Many of you already receive our daily news clips email service called Granite Clips. This is an email sent out each weekday morning around 10am with a summary of and links to important news involving state government, New Hampshire politics, campaign/elections and editorials/op-eds.

For those of you who are not yet subscribed, you can sign-up using the email of your choice using by clicking the following link.

Click here and enter your email address to subscribe:

<http://eepurl.com/yNWMP>

REP. BETSY SANDERS RECOGNIZED FOR VOLUNTEER WORK

In the Winter 2015 edition of the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association's "Timber Crier," publication, Rep. Betsy Sanders (R-Danville) was recognized for her commitment to volunteer work.

The article recognizes Rep. Sanders' work as a member and Chair of the Danville Town Forestry Committee, her work as a legislator on the Resources, Recreation and Development committee and the Fish and Game committee, partnership with the UNH Cooperative Extension, among many other activities that she has taken part in to help her community and further forest conservation. Congratulations on your recognition, Rep. Sanders!

Do you have news about House members? Email us at houserepublicans@leg.state.nh.us.

RGGI Frequently Asked Questions

What is RGGI (Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative)?

RGGI is a program that auctions off "allowances" to produce carbon dioxide emissions in the production of electricity. Currently, the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont participate in the program. Commonly called a regional "cap-and-trade" program, RGGI makes producing electricity that generates carbon dioxide emissions, like coal or natural gas, more expensive.

How much does New Hampshire pay in to the RGGI program?

New Hampshire electricity producers paid about \$15 million to the RGGI program last year. Depending on demand, the price of allowances can vary. About \$73 million has been paid in since the program began.

Does the cost of purchasing allowances get passed on to the average ratepayer?

Most people would assume that fees or taxes that increase the cost of production of any good or service inevitably get passed on to the consumer, even if they aren't specifically listed on their bill.

Where does the money go?

The revenue from the auction of carbon allowances in New Hampshire goes into a special dedicated fund managed by the Public Utilities Commission. Any revenue in excess of the threshold price of \$1 for any allowance sale is rebated to all retail electric ratepayers in the state on a per-kilowatt-hour basis. At least 15% is allocated to the low-income core energy efficiency program. \$2,000,000 is allocated statewide to assist towns and cities with energy efficiency upgrades.

My town/city told me that they'll lose funding if RGGI is repealed. Is that accurate?

Towns and cities may apply for funding on a project by project basis to help pay for the cost of energy efficiency upgrades. Your town may have received funding for a past project, or have a project in mind that might be funded by RGGI grant, but this is not a permanent/regular stream of revenue.

If ratepayers get rebates and my town gets money, what's the problem?

Consumers/ratepayers should be able to keep more of their money in their own pocket. Having the government act as a pass-through, while taking a cut to fund certain other entities, goes against fair, free market principles.