

Republican Review

A Publication of the New Hampshire House Majority Office

House Majority Leader Comments on EBT Reform Bill

CONCORD – New Hampshire House Majority Leader Jack Flanagan (R-Brookline) released the following comments relative to HB 219, a bill that adds restrictions to where EBT cards can be used, including tattoo parlors and cigar shops. HB 219 had a public hearing Wednesday before the House Health & Human Services committee.

House Majority Leader Jack Flanagan

“The majority of government assistance recipients use their EBT benefits for necessary living expenses. But as with any government program, we need to ensure that taxpayer dollars are going toward their intended purpose.”

“We already have restrictions in place that prohibit EBT use in liquor stores, gaming facilities and adult-themes stores. Most people would agree that these are acceptable and reasonable prohibitions on where you can use your EBT card. HB 219 seeks to add some additional reasonable restrictions including tattoo parlors and cigar shops. None of the restrictions currently in law or those proposed in HB219 are necessary living expenses.”

“It may be impossible to track how every single dollar of assistance is spent, but it’s fair for the legislature to explore ways to ensure state funds are being used in a responsible manner.”

There will be a Republican Caucus on Wednesday, February 4th at 9:00am in Representative’s Hall.

There will be House Session on Wednesday, February 4th at 10:00am.

What Can We Learn From VT?

SB116, repealing the license requirement for carrying a concealed firearm, would mirror the less restrictive gun laws in low-crime Vermont. The bill was heard Thursday. Via Twitter:

[@kronayne](#) : *It's not often you hear NH politicians saying they want to be more like Vermont...*

[@SenatorSanborn](#) : *@kronayne, It's not often we have to admit that VT is more free than NH. But we can fix that*

What Should We Forget From VT?

In NH, Democrats are proposing [HB 686](#). This bill would establish a single payer health care system for the state. HB 686 has a public hearing on Tuesday.

Last year, VT Gov. Shumlin proposed a single payer system in VT. The cost of the program would have sent business and individual taxes skyrocketing. [He dropped the plan under immense pressure and opposition.](#)

STAT OF THE WEEK
After this week’s storm, [NH1 reported](#) NH DOT spends

\$100,000/ HOUR

In snow removal costs. This can total up to

\$42 million

in snow removal throughout the winter

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IMPORTANT DATES

- February 9-** House Continuing Education
- February 9-** Committee Whip Training
- 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:

- HB587**, repealing the registration fee for sexual offenders and offenders against children.
- HB675**, relative to eligibility for in-state tuition rates at the university system of New Hampshire and the community college system of New Hampshire.
- HB687**, relative to eligibility for Medicaid.
- HB663**, requiring the implementation of a plan for the transfer of the fish and game department to the department of safety on or before July 1, 2017.
- HB563**, relative to funding for chartered public school pupils.
- HB447**, relative to workers' compensation benefits and establishing payment schedules.

RPS Frequently Asked Questions

What is RPS (Electric Renewable Portfolio Standard)?

New Hampshire's RPS statute, [RSA 362-F](#), requires each electricity provider (PSNH, Unitil, etc.) to meet a percentage of customer load by purchasing or acquiring certificates representing generation from renewable energy.

What types of energy are considered "renewable" under the current RPS statute?

NH's RPS statute divides renewable energy sources into four separate classes. Class I resources include wind, geothermal, hydrogen derived from biomass fuel or methane gas, ocean thermal, wave, current, or tidal energy, methane gas, or biomass. Class II sources include generation facilities that produce electricity from solar technologies. Class III sources include generation facilities that produce electricity from eligible biomass technologies having a capacity of 25 megawatts or less or methane gas facilities. Class IV sources are defined as hydroelectric generation facilities.

What percentage of electricity must come from renewable sources?

When the program began in 2008, 4% of electricity was required to come from renewables (3.5% from Class III and 0.5% Class IV). In 2015, the overall rate required is 15.8%, (6.6% from Class I, 0.3% from Class II, 8% from Class III, and 1.5% from Class IV). By 2025, the required overall percentage will be 24.8%.

What House bills seek to modify or repeal RPS?

There are 3 Republican sponsored bills that seek to address RPS in slightly different ways. All seek to lower the cost of electricity by reducing the effect RPS mandates have on what sources our energy comes from.

HB234 (Rep. Flanagan) - deletes electric renewable energy classes from the electric renewable portfolio standards. This would allow the market to determine the most cost effective renewable sources rather than mandating them. **HB143 (Rep. Murotake)** - adds hydroelectric to Class I renewable energy sources. Currently, hydro is the cheapest renewable form of energy, but the lowest class on the percentage required by RPS. Allowing more hydro into the equation may reduce costs. **HB543 (Rep. Fromuth)** - repeals the electric renewable portfolio standard. This would do away with the RPS statute completely and allow electric providers to offer electricity without a requirement to include more costly renewables.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

HB112 - Further Defining Domicile Qualifications

This week, there was a public hearing on HB112, relative to domicile for voting purposes, sponsored by Rep. Gene Chandler.

The bill adds a section to RSA 654:1 that defines domicile for voting purposes and lists evidence to consider when determining domicile. Some of those qualifications are the location where one pays federal taxes, spends most nights of the year, applies for a driver's license, applies for a passport, among many others.

There will be an exec session on this bill in the coming weeks. We will be sure to keep you updated on where this goes.

Constitutional Carry

On Thursday, the Senate heard SB 116 which would repeal the license requirement for carrying a concealed pistol or revolver.

The bill increases the length of time for which carrying a pistol or revolver is valid, allows a person to carry a concealed firearm without a permit unless otherwise prohibited, and repeals the requirement to obtain a license to carry a firearm.

As of now, there are four states that don't require a permit for concealed carry. In anyone can openly carry a weapon without a permit if they're legally permitted to do so. This change would make it so a permit is not needed to carry a concealed weapon, as well.

Pension Reform Committee Begins Bill Hearings

The Special Committee on Public Employee Pension Plans had its first bill hearing this week. [HB369](#), a bill establishing a defined contribution retirement plan for public employees was heard on Friday, and [HB556](#), a bill establishing a cash balance plan for public employees in the retirement system, will have a hearing on Tuesday February 2. Both bills are sponsored Republicans.

On January 13th, when the committee was appointed, the Speaker set forth the following charge to the committee in a memo to the House Clerk:

It shall be the duty of the Special Committee on Public Employee Pension Plans to consider matters pertaining to the functioning, revision and reform of public employee pension plans and programs; the funding of public employee pension plans and programs; eligibility for participation in and benefits under public employee pension plans and programs; alternative public employee pension plans and programs; and such other matters as may be referred to it.

Given the \$4.5 billion unfunded liability, this will be a continuing and important discussion throughout the legislative term.

HOUSE CONTINUING EDUCATION

Tools every legislator needs

*Please note the date change

DATE: Monday, February 9th

TIME: 10:00am – 3:00pm

PLACE: Representatives Hall

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*