

Republican Review

A Publication of the New Hampshire House Majority Office

House Leaders Comment on Signing of Joint Task force Legislation

CONCORD – House Speaker Shawn Jasper (R-Hudson) and House Majority Leader Dick Hinch (R-Merrimack) released the following statements on the signing of SB576 and SB477 into law today.

“We’re proud to have kept our commitment to get legislation passed and on the governor’s desk this month. Despite the governor’s lack of faith in the legislative process and our ability to act swiftly to this crisis, the Joint Task Force formed by the House and Senate forged ahead and produced these initial bills and provide a clear path forward,” said Jasper. “We have more work to do, and many more bills in the pipeline, but we’re proud to have met our first set of goals. I believe the state can be proud of the work the legislature has done and will continue to do to combat drugs and addiction.”

“Before the Task Force came to fruition, members of both the House and Senate had already filed over 20 bills that addressed the crisis in a number of ways, but we understood the importance of creating a vehicle to move these ideas forward faster than our traditional legislative process might allow,” said Hinch. “This is an evolving public health crisis and the Task Force was never intended to be a one-shot solution, just as the set of bills we acted on today won’t make the problem disappear. We will take action as appropriate and move forward on a broader set of initiatives as our legislative session continues in 2016. This is an ongoing, comprehensive effort that we hope will prevent addiction, improve recovery, and save lives.”

**The next House Session will be on
January 27 at 10am.
There will be a Republican Caucus
at 9am in Reps’ Hall.**

Majority Leader’s Written Testimony Against HB1368

HB 1368-FN, requiring firearms owners to have liability insurance.

It should come as no surprise that I am communicating with you today, representing the House Republican caucus who vote consistently and overwhelmingly to protect the rights of law abiding gun owners. It should also come as no surprise that, from your policy perspective, I’m here to express our opposition to what I see as an onerous mandate proposed in this bill.

Last time I checked, the 2nd amendment is not conditional based on insurance coverage. Unlike other aspects of life that we could classify as privileges - whether it’s driving a car, or owning a home - the constitution gives us the explicit right to keep and bear arms.

Second - criminal activity is criminal activity. We can make a very reasonable assumption that people who engage in criminal acts with firearms will obtain their firearms without regard to existing laws, or new insurance mandates, as prescribed by this bill.

The vast majority of gun owners are responsible, law abiding citizens. And to introduce this mandate and subject these law abiding citizens to a \$10,000 fine if they fail to buy an insurance product is absolutely mind boggling.

This compulsory insurance requirement is not only a violation of what I believe is a basic right, but it could also be discriminatory in that those who wish to own a gun but can’t afford the insurance or the fine would be denied their basic right.

This concept is nothing new. Gun control proponents have been introducing similar legislation in the United States Congress for years. We are not in Washington, Mr. Chairman, and we shouldn’t be playing political games like they do in Congress. I’d ask the committee to recommend this bill inexpedient to legislate.

Thank you,
Rep. Richard Hinch
House Majority Leader

CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD JUST 5 MONTHS AWAY!

In just 5 short months, candidates will be filing to run for all state offices including candidates for the New Hampshire House. Mark your calendars! The filing period runs **June 1 - 10, 2016**.

This is a critical election where Republicans will be tested. We must maintain and grow our Republican majority to the best of our ability.

Our record during legislative 2015-2016 will be a valuable tool for us as we talk with voters this campaign season.

We will be producing a number of publications and materials to help candidates this year, and the committee to Elect House Republicans plans on raising significant resources to benefit Republican nominees in the General Election.

Current House Members: If you haven't yet responded to communication from the House Republican Office or New Hampshire GOP, please help us by letting us know if you plan on running again or not.

Prospective Candidates: Our best chance at victory is running a coordinated campaign. We want to help and be in frequent communication with you over the coming months. Let us know that you are considering filing to run for the NH House.

Email:
info@electhouserepublicans.com

Stay tuned for more news, updates, events related to the 2016 legislative campaign.



House Majority Leader Dick Hinch delivers remarks at the signing ceremony for Joint Task Force expedited bills SB576 and SB447.

Session Recap

SB 369, encouraging public schools to include drug and alcohol education as part of their health education curriculum, passed the House by a voice vote. The Senate has requested a committee of conference.

SB 447, establishing a commission to study Narcan, passed the House by a vote of 275-71

SB 576, relative to the penalty for possession and use of fentanyl-class drugs, insurance coverage for substance use disorders, the funding of the controlled drug prescription health and safety program, the membership of the board of medicine, and prescribers of controlled drugs, passed the House by a vote of 276-69

SPECIAL ELECTION UPDATE

Due to the filing of an independent third candidate, a primary election was held in Hampton, Rockingham County district 21, on Tuesday January 19th.

Due to the resignation of Rep. David Wood (R-Hampton) a special election was called to fill the vacant seat.

Republican and former Representative Ken Sheffert is now running against 2 candidates in the general election to be held March 8th.

Ken served 1 term in the House in 2011-2012. He narrowly lost in the 2014 election by just 5 votes to Rep. Renny Cushing (D-Hampton).

Deputy Majority Leader's Written Testimony Against HB1530

HB 1530-FN-LOCAL, relative to mail-in voting.

Encouraging participation in our electoral process is essential for a representative government. However, we must be extremely cautious when exploring avenues that encourage participation that also create a very strong possibility for fraudulent activity.

We here in New Hampshire take our elections very seriously. We have one of the highest voter participation rates in the country. Granite Staters understand that it is a solemn responsibility to learn about the issues that affect them, engage their local, state and federal candidates, and go through the proper channels to exercise their right to vote - be it in person at the polls or by our very accommodating absentee ballot system.

To my knowledge, there are only three states - Oregon, Washington and Colorado - that use a similar type of voting system, which is not a very good indicator of its feasibility or success. In fact, the voter turnout, or in this case participation rate, in those states is comparable to what we have here in New Hampshire, using our traditional system relied upon for generations.

In our opinion, and likely the opinion of many here today, there are many problems with this specific bill, including the additional costs that will be incurred by our cities and towns to facilitate the program. Without any suggestion of where the funding for all of the labor, materials, and postage involved in this process, this might be a violation of Part I, Article 28-A of our state constitution. I have a feeling that many small towns across our state this are fully prepared to operate polling places just as they have for decades, but they are most likely unprepared to run a mail operation quite like what we'd see in this process.

I believe we all have a responsibility to pass laws that protect the integrity of our electoral system. This bill sends us in the opposite direction. There is no process laid out in this bill that makes me confident that a ballot couldn't be requested for someone, or filled out and sent back, without their knowledge, particularly in our cities and towns with a high number of apartments or other dwellings that may see many residents come and go, but our voter check lists can't keep up.

Additionally, there is no clear process or standards defined in this bill that describes how ballots and signatures would be verified or contested. With the volume of ballots cast by mail, we can only assume that it would be chaotic at best, and could easily lead to election outcomes being decided in a courtroom rather than at our polling places.

I hope that you will join me - no matter your political affiliations or persuasions - and accept that this bill, even if well intentioned, is a risk this state just can't take.

Thank you,

Rep. Stephen Schmidt (R-Wolfeboro)
Deputy House Majority Leader

2016 HOUSE DEADLINES

Thursday, February 4, 2016
Last day to report House Bills going to a second committee

Thursday, February 11, 2016
Last day to act on House Bills going to a second committee

Thursday, March 3, 2016
Last day to report House Bills not in a second committee

Thursday, March 10, 2016
Last day to act on House Bills not in a second committee

Thursday, March 17, 2016
Last day to report all House Bills

Thursday, March 24, 2016
CROSSOVER Last day to act on all House Bills

Thursday, April 14, 2016
Last day to report Senate Bills going to a second committee

Thursday, April 21, 2016
Last day to act on Senate Bills going to a second committee

Thursday, May 5, 2016
Last day to report all remaining Senate Bills

Thursday, May 12, 2016
Last day to act on all remaining Senate Bills

Thursday, May 19, 2016
Last day to form Committees of Conference

Thursday, May 26, 2016
Last day to sign Committee of Conference reports

Thursday, June 2, 2016
Last day to act on Committee of Conference reports