

MAJORITY REPORT

Volume 2 Issue 9

April 7, 2006



From the desk of the Majority Leader...

Another session is winding down and it appears that the major work load that we faced in January is behind us. I am amazed by the amount of legislation that we were asked to study, debate and vote on this session. With 653 bills filed this session, along with 179 bills retained from last year, we dealt with 832 bills alone between January 4th and March 22nd!

It is somewhat ironic that, in some ways, we are closing out this biennium

much the same way we began it in January 2005—dealing with important educational issues. The Education Committee worked hard to take SB 131-FN, which sets up a 21st Century Scholarship Program, and amend it to eliminate any concern of tax dollars going to nonpublic entities. The bill begins with a one dollar appropriation and establishes a corporation, similar to the Healthy Kids Corporation, that allows for *private* donations. The corporation will be made up of primarily public members and will allocate scholarships to deserving students. This is a true scholarship program, funded privately, that will offer choices in education—one of our major Republican Legislative Priorities.

The Education Committee is also sending to the floor of the House SB 268, which raises the age of required attendance of children in school and makes an appropriation to establish a 2-year pilot program for increasing vocational educational opportunities in the Manchester and Nashua school districts. The vote of the committee was 11-10 OTP. While the Majority Office has not taken a position on this legislation, we feel that perhaps there are still several important questions that need to be answered with regard to parental rights, funding for the supplemental programs, the impact on our educational infrastructure and the correlation of dropout/completion rates in states where this has been attempted. Encouraging young people to stay in school and continue their education is a noble idea, but perhaps this plan is one that is worth studying further. There is no doubt that education is crucial to future success, but should we be increasing the CSA age to 18 without knowing the cost of providing state-wide funding for supplemental programs? Again, this is just one of several areas that perhaps should be studied further. This will be a conscience vote and we urge you to carefully consider all of the questions before you when making a decision.

We expect to be dealing with approximately 30 bills during each of our Wednesday House Sessions during the month of April. Each session will begin at 10:00 AM. We also remind you to join us at the Upham Walker House during the lunchtime break of our May 3rd session for our popular “Springtime Hot Dog Social.”

Thanks again for your hard work this session.

	2005	2006
Bills filed	760	653
Retained bills	---	179
Total	760	832
Received from the Senate	----	130
Number of session days	21	13*
Roll Calls/Divisions	130	147

*as of 4/5/06



HB 2006

**Public Works & Highways
OTP-A, 16-0**

Relative to the state 10-year transportation improvement plan.

- The Majority Office SUPPORTS the motion of OTP-A because:

**VOTE YES ON
OTP-A**

This legislation has been worked on extensively by members of regional planning agencies, the NH Department of Transportation, the Governor and the private sector.

- The bill takes ALL fiscal issues into account. While no new projects were funded, many other projects were expanded.
- The committee felt that additional legislative oversight by the Capital Budget Overview Committee should be added.
- In line with our Republican Legislative Priorities, the committee finished with a bill that is fiscally responsible.

HB 131-FN

**Education
OTP-A, 13-8**

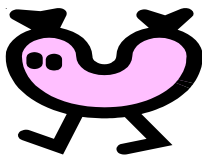
Relative to establishing a school choice certificate program

- The Majority Office SUPPORTS the motion of OTP-A because:

**VOTE YES ON
OTP-A**

This bill creates a scholarship program for low income families to offer choices in education.

- With the \$1 appropriation provision, the committee amendment removes the argument of tax dollars going to non-public organizations.
- It establishes a corporation, similar to HealthyKids, and allows for **private** donations.
- The corporation is made up primarily of public members.
- This bill is one of our Republican Legislative Priorities, under Educational Initiatives.



**The Majority Office
invites you to our
2nd Annual Spring *Hot Dog Social***

**Wednesday, May 3rd, during the lunch-time
break from the House session, at the
Upham-Walker House**