



# MAJORITY REPORT

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*From the desk of  
the Majority Leader...*

It has been a busy few weeks in the Majority Office in preparation for the upcoming legislative session. Thanks to feedback that we received from our membership and committee leadership, we were able to set our Republican Legislative priorities for 2006—guidelines that will better enable us to prioritize the nearly 700 bills that have been filed. Legislation that falls within one of our five major priorities—Economic Development & Fiscal Responsibility; Ethics & the Voting Process; Safety, Rights & Liberties; Education Initiatives; and Affordable, Accessible Healthcare—will be closely tracked by the Majority Office. Additionally, during the final days of the year, we have scheduled meetings with committee leadership to further discuss legislation that we as Republicans should be supporting.

However, early in the upcoming session as we deal with retained bills, we will have the opportunity to pass legislation that will have a far-reaching impact on the way we do business in New Hampshire. The ethics bill (**SB-206**), retained by the Election Law committee, establishes and enforces ethical guidelines for all within the executive branch, including the governor.

The committee held 45 hours of hearings and spent considerable time researching the issues and laws to bring forward a comprehensive ethics reform bill that found consensus support among Democrats and Republicans in all but one instance.

The committee would not, and should not, agree to allow *any* governor to appoint four out of the seven members of the executive branch ethics committee.

This bill will ensure that no one person can “stack” the ethics committee. Three appointments will be made by the governor, and approved by the Executive Council. No more than two appointments shall be of the same political party and one must be an attorney and member of the New Hampshire Bar Association. Additionally, two members each will be nominated by the secretary of state and the treasurer and cannot be of the same political party. There are several other important points (*see diagram to the right*), including dealing with the important issue of simultaneous employment, that makes this meaningful ethics reform that we should pass.

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## SB 206

Relative to the state code of ethics and establishing an executive ethics commission.

**Election Law, OTP with amendment, 11-6.** The Majority Office **supports** the committee report because:

- It clarifies *simultaneous employment* and public service by prohibiting a lobbyist from serving at the same time as a public employee.
- A person who falls under the definition of *public official* cannot serve as a lobbyist for six months after leaving the service of the state.
- Any person, appointed or elected, serving in an official capacity, must file a financial disclosure statement.
- It prohibits all but the smallest of token gifts—except an award under \$50 in value or one that is offered to all 424 members of the General Court (i.e. event tickets and etc.).



The Majority Office asks that you vote to **SUPPORT** the committee reports!

**HB 515**

Relative to group health insurance coverage for certain entities. **Commerce, OTP, 15-2**

The Majority Office **supports** the committee report because:

- This bill is not a “quick fix” or a “silver bullet”
- The bill adopts a new approach to the primary function performed by a purchasing alliance.
- It does not change any of the mandates or rating criteria adopted under SB125.
- It is similar to a model that successfully reduced workers’ compensation costs in NH.
- The bill provides that a purchasing alliance shall set membership criteria that allows any employer group to join.
- It is designed to create financial incentives that will accrue directly to the members of the group that success in effecting a reduction in cost.

**HB 627**

Relative to raising the age of minority for juvenile delinquency from 17 to 18 years of age. **Criminal Justice and Public Safety, OTP, with amendment, 10-5.** The Majority Office **supports** the committee report because:

- It restores seventeen year olds who commit crimes to the juvenile justice system.
- Seventeen year olds may still be certified as adults if charged with a serious crime.
- Seventeen year old offenders should be required to stay in school, get proper counseling and continued monitoring.
- A seventeen year old—now considered an adult—receives few, if any services.
- The age was originally lowered to 17, due in large part, to an overcrowding problem at the Youth Development Center, which is no longer an issue.

**CACR 21**

Relative to the term of office for governor. Providing that, beginning with the 2010 general election, there shall be a 4-year term of office for governor. **Election Law, ITL, 13-5.**

The Majority Office **supports** the committee report because:

- A two-year term keeps the governor more accountable to the people—the voters can review a governor’s performance, as they do for all elected officials, every two years.
- Two-year terms ensure an appropriate level of integrity and competency of elected officials.
- The system has worked extremely well for New Hampshire.



—Desk (continued from page one)

By supporting the committee report and passing this important legislation, the House will be sending a message to our constituents that the time has come to establish a strong executive ethics committee—one that will guard against any future ethical abuses within the executive branch of our government.

There are two other retained bills whose committee reports the Majority Office strongly supports. **HB 100**, as amended by the Education committee, will provide the technical correction necessary to **HB 616**—the education funding bill passed last session. The legislative intent has been to eliminate all donor towns and **HB 100** accomplishes this intent. The bill has received the unanimous support of the committee as well as the full support of both the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.

The Election Law committee also retained a bill (**HB 184**) that would eliminate straight ticket voting at the election polls. It is clear that straight ticket voting simplifies the election process when someone desires to vote for all the candidates of his/her party.

Contrary to what supporters of the bill will tell you, straight-ticket voting does not contribute to recounts. We support the committee’s recommendation of **ITL** and ask you to support the committee report on January 4.

We in the Majority Office wish you all a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. We look forward to working with you during the coming session to create good public policy that subscribes not only to the principles of our legislative priorities but to the Republican Party platform as well. We hope to see

**HB 100**

Establishing an education equity index to provide state education assistance to municipalities. **Education,**

**OTP, with amendment, 20-0.** The Majority Office supports the committee report because:

- The bill provides the technical correction necessary to the education funding bill (HB 616), passed last session to eliminate all donor towns.
- This was the original legislative intent of the legislation.
- As amended, HB 100 has the full support of both the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.

**HB 184**

Eliminating straight ticket voting. **Election Law, ITL, 12-6.** We support the committee report because:

- Straight ticket voting simplifies the process when the voter wishes to vote for all candidates on the ballot that are of a single party.
- The option of straight ticket voting does not prevent a voter from voting for any candidate of another party.
- Straight ticket voting does not contribute to recounts.

you all at the next Republican caucus at 9:00 AM on January 4th in Representatives Hall. Given the discussions that need to take place before we vote on retained bills, this could very well be the most important caucus that we will hold this session. It is important that we have a strong turnout.



## 2006 Republican Legislative Priorities

### √ Economic Development & Fiscal Responsibility

- Encourage economic growth and job creation through legislation.
- Eliminate burdensome regulations that negatively impact NH businesses.
- Be fiscally responsible in managing any budget surplus by first addressing the Rainy Day Fund and any unexpected needs.

### √ Ethics & the Voting Process

- Ensure the integrity of the voting process.
- Strengthen guidelines for contributions, gifts and ethics in state government.

### √ Safety, Rights & Liberties

- Support legislation that will protect private property.
- Pass the NH Child Predators Act.
- Resolve illegal alien trespass by closing any loopholes in NH statutes.
- Protect NH residents from identity theft.

### √ Education Initiatives

- Examine options for parents & students.
- Encourage competition among schools.

### √ Affordable, Accessible Healthcare

- Oppose mandates that could drive up the cost of healthcare.
- Support innovative legislation that will improve upon the affordability and accessibility of healthcare.

### Important Dates to Remember:

**January 4**—Republican caucus (9:00 A.M.), Representatives Hall  
House session to act on retained bills (10:00 A.M.), Representatives Hall.

**January 5**—Committee hearings begin.

**January 16**—Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

**January 18**—House session to act on retained bills (10:00 A.M.), Representatives Hall



Check out the Majority Office website at:  
[www.nhousegop.com](http://www.nhousegop.com)

The calendar of events is updated on a daily basis on the website... You will also be able to check out current weather in Concord, road conditions and the latest Majority Report.

### Majority Leadership

Majority Leader Mike O'Neil—271-3378  
Deputy Majority Leader Fran Wendelboe—271-3378  
Majority Whip Pam Price—271-3356  
Asst. Majority Whip Mary Griffin

### Legislative Aides

Lynne Merrill—271-3663  
Jim Rivers—271-6277  
Paul Smith—271-3665

### Administrative Assistants

Seana Barriere—271-3364  
Teresa Preston—271-3654