



MAJORITY REPORT

Volume 2 Issue 6

February 10, 2006



From the desk of the Majority Leader...

As the Majority Leader, I encourage my colleagues to always be mindful of the rules of decorum which guide our actions in the House chamber. Session days can be long, and at times contentious, but it is imperative that we show respect for each other, and for the institution which we serve. Once we had concluded the second day of back-to-back sessions on Thursday, I left the State House with mixed emotions—satisfaction in what we had accomplished and frustration in how we had accomplished it. Granted, we had just completed two days of debating issues of great concern to the members of the General Court. But during those hours of debate, the actions

Announcing the first.....

2006 House Majority Party!!!

Tuesday, March 7

Upham Walker House

Immediately following the session!

Please join us for food and drink!



Session dates & times

- Wednesday, Feb. 15 (10:00 am)
- Thursday, Feb. 16 (1:00 pm)
- Wednesday, Feb. 22 (1:00 pm)
- Tuesday, Mar. 7 (1:00 pm)
- Wednesday, Mar. 8 (10 am)
- Thursday, Mar. 9 (10 am)
- Wednesday, Mar. 22 (10 am)

of a few left much to be desired. I have great respect for the process by which we create public policy for the people of our state. But there are times when some of our colleagues show a lack of respect for the process through their actions before, during and following debate.

At times last week I was embarrassed by the actions of a few members who, for whatever reason, continued to openly ignore our rules of decorum. Perhaps their goal was to purposely disrupt the debate, or perhaps it was merely a case of getting caught up in the heat of the moment during tough debate. Whatever the reason, it cannot continue. We all need to take a step back and reflect upon our own actions, as individuals. Walking out of the hall when a member is speaking is NOT respectful, carrying-on a private conversation, either in your seat or at the back of the hall, creates confusion and is NOT respectful, referring to a colleague by their name from the well, is NOT respectful, and disrupting debate simply for the sake of being mischievous is NOT respectful.

You may not always agree with a motion that is being made or testimony that is being given, but I would urge you to show the same respect to a colleague giving testimony as you would expect in return. For example, last week an unpopular motion was made to limit debate. While neither

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the Speaker nor the Majority Office supported that motion, we respected the right of a member to offer it for a vote. Unfortunately, there were those who took the opportunity to create confusion under the guise of “following Masons Rules.” This was disrespectful and counterproductive to our efforts.

With over 500 bills yet to be voted upon, we have little time to waste. I sincerely hope that we can put the unruly, and sometimes disrespectful, behavior of last session behind us. The people of our state are watching and it is time for the members of the General Court to maintain an atmosphere of civility and decency when doing the work of the people. If we show respect for each other, as well as the process that guides us, come June, we will be able to leave this building proud of not only what we accomplished, but how we accomplished it.

Check out the Majority Office website at:
www.nhousegop.com



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

Majority Leadership

- Majority Leader Mike O’Neil—271-3654
- Dep. Majority Leader Fran Wendelboe—271-3378
- Majority Whip Pam Price—271-3356
- Asst. Majority Whip Mary Griffin

Legislative Aides

- Jim Rivers—271-6277
- Paul Smith—271-3665

Administrative Assistants

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

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.

√ **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.



Finance Committee
OTP, 13-9

HB 1370

VOTE YES ON
OTP

Transferring certain surplus monies to the Revenue Stabilization account (**Rainy Day Fund**).

- This supports one of our **major goals and objectives** to “be fiscally responsible in managing any budget surplus by first addressing the Rainy Day Fund.”
- Keeping a viable Rainy Day Fund is sound economic policy that will help us maintain a high bond rating on Wall Street, which in turn will save the state and its taxpayers.
- This will provide the state with the flexibility it needs to address increased demands on the operating budget in times of unexpected needs.
- If we do not have reserves ready in case of emergencies, there will be those who will attempt to enact new taxes.
- The surplus that this bill addresses is money left over from the last budget.

Election Law
OTP, 11-6

HB 1222

VOTE YES ON
OTP

Relative to **unlawful** voting.

- **HB 1222** establishes a Class B felony for any person who votes in more than one state in the same election, eliminating certain voter fraud.
- One of the major **Republican Goals & Objectives** is “to ensure the integrity of the voting process,” and **HB 1222** helps to maintain that integrity.
- This bill allows for an election official to mark a person as having voted in that election to serve as evidence that the person did vote, without shifting any burden of proof from the state.
- The Attorney General’s office testified in favor of this legislation.

Ways & Means
ITL, 12-1

HB 1319-FN-A

VOTE YES ON
ITL

Relative to decreasing the rate of the tobacco tax.

- The proposed change would reduce state revenues by an estimated \$43M per year without offering a method for replacing these funds—which is in conflict with being **fiscally responsible**.
- The tobacco tax is the fourth largest revenue stream in the state and 40 percent of the tax burden is borne by our of state citizens.
- The biennial state budget has incorporated revenues based on the current rate of 80 cents per pack in its revenue projection.



**Ways & Means
ITL, 15-5**

HB 1693-FN-L

**VOTE YES ON
ITL**

Relative to funding an adequate education.

- This bill would create yet another new education funding mechanism.
- It would establish gambling as a revenue source. (The House defeated a gambling measure just weeks ago by a 2.5-1 margin).
- The bill sets up “**dedicated**” funds in several areas, which the Majority Office is opposed to.
- The BPT and BET would be reduced under the assumption that 3,900 video gambling machines around the state would fully fund education as well as any revenue losses.

**Ways & Means
ITL, 16-4**

HB 1651

**VOTE YES ON
ITL**

Relative to repealing the statewide enhanced education tax.

- The state funds a low and moderate income property tax relief program, which would be eliminated by this legislation. This program currently makes \$7.4M available annually to those tax payers.
- Any elimination of the statewide enhanced education tax should be thoroughly studied because this tax plays an important role in the calculation of grants to NH communities.
- Repealing the statewide enhanced education tax at this time could expose the legislature to the possible charge of defiance or disregard of the court’s ruling.

**Ways & Means
ITL, 12-8**

HB 1457-FN-L

**VOTE YES ON
ITL**

Establishing an electricity transmission utility property tax..

- Portions of this bill require certain dedicated funds that have otherwise been appropriated in the operating budget.
- This bill has serious fiscal implications; there is nothing to stop any New England state from enacting the same type of tax on New Hampshire.
- It further opens the door for lawsuits against NH by other states and raises significant concerns about policy allowances from the New England regulatory agencies.
- DRA projects a decrease in state revenues of over \$6M as a result of the elimination of the electricity consumption tax, coupled with the implementation of this tax.