



MAJORITY REPORT

Volume 2 Issue 4

January 13, 2006



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

The House returns to work on Wednesday the 18th to finish up on legislation that was retained from the 2004-05 session. It will be an extremely busy day for us as Governor Lynch presents his State of the State address and we honor the UNH football team for another outstanding season before, getting down to the business of the day.

I would like to take a moment to commend our Republican membership for working together last week to pass a strong executive ethics bill. Despite a wave of misinformation that was being circulated throughout the State House during the final hours of debate, Republicans stuck to the facts and supported an amendment offered by Mike Whalley—an amendment which answered all of the concerns addressed by the Attorney General. I am looking forward to working with the Senate on the committee of conference and placing a strong, well thought-out ethics bill on the desk of the governor.

Last year we passed an education funding bill (**HB 616**) that became law in July without the governor's signature. In passing **HB 100** on January 4th, we made the necessary technical correction to **HB 616** that eliminates three donor towns. We worked on a number of different education bills last year before settling on **HB 616**. But the ink is barely dry on that legislation and already we are seeing an attempt to introduce a new funding formula.

The Education Committee report of **ITL** on **HB 650**, which would add a whole new targeting factor, should be supported because we need to

HB 650-FN-L

Revising education funding and distribution and establishing needs-based matching grants. It came out of the **Education Committee ITL, 14-5**. We urge you to support the committee report because:

- Contrary to what those in the minority are claiming: **this is not merely a technical correction to HB 616!**
- This bill adds a whole new targeting factor on top of the five factors passed, in **HB 616**, by nearly a 3 to 1 margin in the House last session.
- NH towns need time to adjust to the new formula, giving them stability and predictability.
- This bill relies on median income information collected nearly 7 years ago and projects 4 years into the future, without accurate data.
- The Majority Office is not supporting additional education funding bills for the current biennium.

let **HB 616** do what it was designed to do, without confusing the issue by throwing education funding formula after education funding formula at our cities and towns. They clearly need time to adjust to the new formula. Those who are looking to overturn the committee report claim that **HB 650** is merely a technical correction. Nothing could be further from the truth. This legislation not only adds a new targeting factor, but also relies on median income information that was collected nearly seven years ago. The Speaker has also made

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—Desk (continued from page one)

it clear that we will not support any new education funding bills this session. The Majority Office asks you to support the Education Committee report of ITL on **HB 650**.

We in the Majority Office also ask you to support the committee report of ITL on **HB 91**, which repeals the local property tax exemption for wooden poles and conduits. This clearly is in direct conflict with our Republican goals and objectives of encouraging economic growth. **HB 91** is not business-friendly legislation. The fairness of the Communications Service Tax (CST) has been studied and voted upon no fewer than six times, and each study reached the same conclusion: the CST treats all telecommunications companies equally. To repeal the exemption now would create an undue burden on anyone with a phone line entering their residence or business, creating a **new tax**.

Due to the heavy workload facing us, we will hold two important caucuses—Tuesday, Jan 17 at 9:00 AM and Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 9:15 AM—in Representatives Hall. There is a lot of work to be done on Jan. 18th and it is important that we keep our momentum going on Wednesday and right throughout the session. I urge you to attend these caucuses and be ready to discuss key legislation that we will be asked to vote on.

Finally, following our session on Wednesday we would appreciate any time that you could spare at the Republican State Headquarters to help with the election of Republican candidate Al Baldasaro in the Jan. 24th special election in Londonderry and Auburn. Phone banks will be set up with lists of calls to be made. Any time that you could spare to help elect another Republican would be appreciated.

We are off to a great start this session.....let's work together to keep it going!

HB 91 Repealing the local property tax exemption for wooden poles and conduits. **Ways & Means, ITL, 11-5.** The

Majority Office supports the committee report because:

- This bill is not business-friendly and is in direct conflict to the Republican goal of encouraging economic growth.
- It repeals **SB 11**, which passed the House last May, 255-109, and has become law.
- The fairness of the Communications Service Tax and the pole and conduit exemption has been studied and voted upon no fewer than six times and the same conclusion has been reached: the CST treats all telecommunications companies equally.
- To repeal the exemption would be creating a new tax

**Vote to ITL
SB 128-FN and HB 91**



SB 128-FN relative to the establishment of emissions reduction standards as required by the Clean Power Act. **Science, Technology & Energy, ITL 9-5.** The Majority Office supports the report because:

- It requires reduction levels that current technology does not provide for.
- The Dept. of Environmental Services originally requested the bill, but after results from testing at the PSNH power plant, DES requested the installation of scrubber technology by 2013.
- Legislation has been filed this session specifically dealing with the request by DES.



Majority Office Comings & Goings.....

We recently welcomed a new member to our staff. Former House member **Paul Smith**, who represented Londonderry and Auburn before resigning at the end of last session, has joined the Majority Office staff as a legislative aide.

He was halfway through his second term in the House when he was forced to step down after he moved to another district in the state.

A native of Auburn, and a graduate of Manchester Memorial high school, Smith went on to earn a B.A. in Political Science from Norwich University in Northfield, VT.

Lynne Merrill, of Kingston, has left the Majority Office to return to the private sector. We thank her for her hard work and wish her well in her new endeavors.

Finally, at the end of the month we will be welcoming **Kelly Murphy** of Farmington, a student intern from the University of New Hampshire. Kelly will be working closely with both Paul Smith and Jim Rivers in covering committee hearings and working on independent projects from our office.

HB 670-FN-A

relative to the land and community heritage investment program. **Finance Committee, ITL**

12-7. The Majority Office supports the committee because:

- The bill was retained so that the budget process could be completed.
- \$4 million in FY 06 and \$6M in FY 07 was appropriated.
- The Senate came up with the idea of dedicating highway mitigation funds of \$3.5M each year, plus \$1.5M—or the same \$10M.
- Proponents of LCHIP do not acknowledge this \$3.5M.
- The Senate plan has not had a fair demonstration.

HB 553-FN-A

Relative to a state tax on large lottery winnings. **Ways & Means Committee, ITL, 11-7.** The

Majority Office supports the committee because:

- The bill creates a **new tax**, which conflicts with both the Republican Party Platform and the Majority Office goals and objectives.
- On top of paying federal taxes, a NH resident would have to pay 10% to the state for any winnings over \$5,000.
- The minority report calls for this bill to fund LCHIP, which is already funded through a mechanism established in the last budget.
- This would double taxation for some and triple taxation for others!

Republican Caucuses!!

Representatives Hall

Tuesday, January 17, 9:00 A.M.
Wednesday, January 18, 9:15 A.M.

HB 1402

relative to defining “occupant” for purposes of liability for construction or

maintenance of recreational trails. **Resources, Recreation and Development, OTP 9-6 with amendment.** The Majority Office supports the committee report because:

- The bill is extremely important to the north country in protecting the billion dollar snowmobile industry.
- Maintaining and improving trails for public use utilizing volunteers, paid or not, has become essential.
- The bill was requested by the Department of Resources & Economic Development.



HB 391

relative to voter registration forms for students. **Election Law Committee, OTP with amendment, 12-6.**

We support the committee report because:

- This supports the Majority Office priority of *ensuring the integrity of the voting process*.
- Maintaining citizenship and domicile affidavits as secret documents is unnecessary and only adds to the concerns that elections are not open and honest.
- Allowing affidavits to be challenged and any false votes to be discarded will avoid the continuing concerns that the votes of
- NH residents are being diluted by votes of people who do not live in their towns or cities.

HB 639

relative to voter registration. **Election Law Committee, OTP with amendment, 9-5.**

The Majority Office supports the committee report because:

- The bill ensures the privacy of all legitimate votes and will only reveal the voting of those who do so illegally.
- It would expand the election recount procedures to allow false election-day citizenship and domicile affidavits to be challenged and to have the wrongful vote removed from the recount.
- HB 639 also supports the Majority Office priority of *ensuring the integrity of the voting process in NH*.

HB 638-FN-A

relative to county liability for payment of nursing home costs. **Finance Committee, OTP with amendment, 14-2.** The Majority Office supports the committee report because:

- The committee amendment extends the moratorium on new nursing home and rehabilitation beds until June 30, 2009 to prevent overcrowding, which would create a lack of services.
- **HB 638** removes the increase in county payments for old age assistance and aid to the permanently and totally disabled that was a result of the budget.
- It directs the Department of Health & Human Services to seek federal funds for the unreimbursed expenses paid by the counties and to pay those revenues back to the counties.



Check out the Majority Office website at:
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.

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