

# MAJORITY REPORT

Volume 1 Issue 8

March 25, 2005

## *From the desk of the Majority Leader*



We face perhaps our busiest week of the session thus far with a number of extremely important bills headed for the floor of the House on Wednesday and Thursday. Because we will be dealing with such important legislation, it is critical that we have a large turnout at the Republican caucus at 9:00 a.m. each morning.

This week's House calendar will be separated into two parts. Included in Part I will be legislation dealing with **Education Funding**, the **Capital Budget**, and **GraniteCare**. The rest of the legislation will appear in House Calendar Part II, including the three bills that we did not get to last Wednesday.

At the beginning of this session, the Majority Office made it clear that we would be supporting decisions made in committee, with rare exception. This week we feel it is necessary to take a strong stand against the Labor Committee and their decision (OTP, 11-5) on HB 137-FN, which deals with unemployment compensation benefits for part-time employees.

We feel it necessary to speak out when legislation goes against the goals and objectives that our members helped us to formulate in January. We intend to support legislation that works to provide an economic climate and infrastructure that will attract business to the State. This bill will have a negative impact on economic development. The Department of Employment Security calculates a cost for HB-137-FN of over \$10M. Additionally, mandating the pilot program is a violation against Part I, Article 28-A unfunded mandates. As a result, a court challenge is most certain.

Both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Labor committee have been informed of our decision to oppose the committee report on the floor of the House. We ask you to **vote no on OTP** when HB 137-FN comes to the floor of the House.

We also ask your support for HB-691, which revises the Medicaid program. This bill takes an important first step to modernize the Medicaid program of health care for the indigent elderly and disabled. We ask you to **vote yes on OTP** when HB 691-FN-L comes to the floor of the House.

With the Educating Funding bill (HB 616-FN-LOCAL) also coming before the House for debate and a vote on Wednesday, we have scheduled an important *Education Funding Informational Session* for all House members on Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. in Representatives Hall. This timely session will help better prepare us all for the discussion that will take place when the bill comes up for debate on Wednesday.

Within this Majority Report we have also listed several pieces of legislation that we would like you to support. We will be issuing a second Majority Report early in the week with additional legislation.

It is important that we all stick together as Republicans when we are called upon to make decisions on the important issues such as those facing us this week. If you have any questions whatsoever about these or any other issues, please contact myself or Majority Whip Pam Price.



The Majority Office *SUPPORTS* the Committee Reports on the following bills:

**HB 616-FN-LOCAL**

This bill revises the calculation and distribution of adequate education grants. The bill comes to the floor as a consensus, compromise bill in every sense. It came out of **Education, OTP, 16-4**. We support the committee report because:

- It meets the Majority Office education funding objectives set forth in January, including local control of education policy, a formula that is fair and equitable to all, repeals the property tax, and eliminates donor towns.
- It adopts the concept of a base, per pupil cost for education and arrives at a uniform property tax which would be needed to raise the amount of money for all students in the state.
- Utilizing a targeting formula, \$154M will be distributed to our towns and cities which qualify for grants.
- No town or city will experience a grant reduction of more than 10 percent a year.
- The bill funds the Performance Improvement Fund with \$1M to assist those towns and cities with subpar education performance.

**HB 691-FN-L**

This bill takes an important first step in modernizing the Medicaid program of health care for the indigent elderly and disabled. It came out of **Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs OTP, 16-3**. We support the committee report because:

- Under this bill, choice is emphasized, including opportunity for home health care, assisted living and intermediate care, as well as nursing home care.
- The bill closes loopholes in current law that allows for individuals to impoverish themselves to qualify for Medicaid.
- A non-partisan subcommittee held over 35 hours of hearings and concluded that the bill is fair, workable, and sustainable.
- The Medicaid system is saved for those it was intended to serve and provides a dignified, strong and viable Medicaid system.

**HB 619-FN**

This bill updates the New Hampshire skier and ski area responsibility laws, last updated in 1978, so that the statute reflects the activities and equipment at ski areas in 2005. It came out of **Judiciary OTP, 11-8**. We support the committee report because:

- The amendment removes some of the most contentious issues and adds a study committee to review if any other additional winter sports activities need to be included.
- The bill will help ensure that NH ski resorts will continue to remain competitive.
- The bill maintains the appropriate balance that exists in law today so that skiers and ski area operators understand their respective responsibilities for safety at a ski area.

Please vote to **SUPPORT** the committee reports!





The Majority Office *SUPPORTS* the Committee Reports on the following bills:

**HB 513**

This bill permits an inspection station to be designated as a “non-diagnostic system vehicle only” inspection station, which shall be exempt from the OBD II emission testing requirements. It came out of **Transportation OTP WITH AMENDMENT, 9-0**. We support the committee report because:

- No inspection may charge more than \$15 for the EPA OBD II test.
- If a vehicle fails the OBD test and passes all other inspection requirements, it shall be issued a temporary waiver that permits its operation for 60 days, in order to make repairs.

**HB 611-FN**

This bill is the revision of SB110, relative to small group insurers. It came out of **Commerce OTP, 20-0**. We support the committee report because:

- It establishes a small group reinsurance mechanism.
- It creates a composite band of case characteristics used to establish premiums.
- It sets a limit of 4:1 variability on premium rates, and establishes a 15 percent cap on a premium rate increase, excluding trend.

**VOTE NO!!**

**ON OTP ON HB 137-FN  
AND THEN  
VOTE YES ON ITL!**



**ON RECONSIDERATION  
OF HB 323**

- This bill goes against the Republican state platform.
- The Department of Employment Security has calculated a cost of over \$10M.
- Mandating the pilot program is a violation against Part I, Article 28-A unfunded mandates

The bill prohibits a person from filing with the registry of deeds a document that includes an individual’s social security number, credit card number, or other financial account numbers. This bill was defeated on the floor of the house. **We oppose reconsideration. It came out of Municipal & County Government ITL, 18-0.**

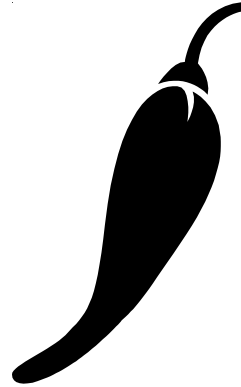
- The committee agreed with the bill’s intent to protect our privacy, but the real “fix” needs to come on a larger scale.
- A more inclusive solution needs to be found without imposing the burden on the Registry of Deeds.



*When dealing with legislation,  
please remember our*

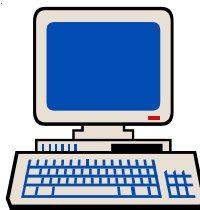
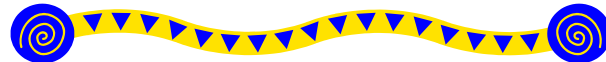
**Goals & Objectives**

- ✓ Solve the Education funding problem by creating a formula that is fair and equitable, while eliminating donor towns and repealing the statewide property tax.
- ✓ Create a balanced budget that is fiscally sound, with realistic revenue and expenditure projections, and with no new or increased taxes.
- ✓ Provide better access to quality health care and prescription drugs at affordable prices; Medicaid reform; review and possibly revise SB110; and tort reform.
- ✓ Protect the integrity of the voter system
- ✓ Work to provide an economic climate and infrastructure that will attract businesses to the State.



*The Annual  
Majority Office  
Chile Cook-Off  
is coming soon!*

Please contact Teresa Preston in the Majority office at 271-3654 if you'd like to enter your chili!



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.

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