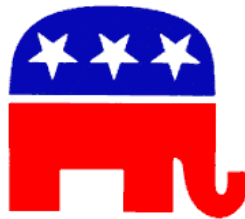


# Republican Report

“An unlimited power to tax involves, necessarily, the power to destroy.”

—Daniel Webster



Volume 2, Issue 8

February 29, 2008

## *A message from the Republican Leader.....*

I hope that you had the opportunity to relax and enjoy a break from your legislative duties this past week. A quick look at this week's House Calendar shows that we are facing an extremely busy month ahead. There are 224 bills on the Consent Calendar as well as 49 bills on the Regular Calendar. The calendar has been broken up into two parts, with 79 additional bills scheduled for the March 12th session. That's a total of 352 bills to be acted upon on the floor of the House.

According to the speaker's office, the House will meet at 10 a.m. on Wed., March 5th, Wed., March 12th, and again at 1 p.m. on Thurs., March 13th, *if necessary*. House sessions are also planned for Tues., March 18th, Wed., March 19th, and Thurs., March 20th, *as needed*.

Due to a problem with printing services, the calendars may be late in arriving in your mailbox, however they are available on-line through the General Court website. I urge you to look the calendar over closely and bring any concerns that you may have to our caucus on **Wednesday morning, March 5th at 9 a.m.** (Rooms 305-07, LOB).

### *Session Dates*

Wed., March 5th (10 a.m.)

Wed., March 12th (10 a.m.)

Thurs., March 13th (1 p.m., *if necessary*)

Tues., March 18th (10 a.m.)

Wed., March 19th (10 a.m.)\*

Thurs., March 20th (10 a.m.)\*

### *Republican Caucus*

**Wednesday, Mar. 5th, 9 a.m.**

**Rooms 305-05, LOB**

*(future caucus times TBA)*

### **New Tax on Cigars**

**HB 1309**, relative to the definition of “cigarette,” is yet another **tax** that would adversely effect sales at stores along the NH border—the very same stores which have already been hurt by two huge cigarette tax increases in the past two bienniums. We ask you to **support** the Minority position of **ITL**.

### **Commerce Bills to Watch**

There are a number of bills coming out of the Commerce committee that we'd like your support on. **HB 1296**, relative to health insurance coverage in the event of divorce or legal separation, is an attempt to repeal post-divorce insurance coverage that was passed last year. This was bad policy a year ago and repealing it is the smartest thing this House can do; this new mandate could result in higher premiums leading small business employers to consider dropping family coverage for their employees.

**HB 1602** is similar in its attempt to remove the 26-year old dependent coverage statute from the books. We took a hard position against this provision last year as it allowed for any 26-year old in NH, whether or not they are still residing at home, to continue to receive insurance benefits. It is wrong, fiscally irresponsible, and has similarly forced small business employers to reconsider making family plans available. Both of these bills came out of Commerce with a report of ITL, and we would ask you to vote no on both those and **support** the motion of **OTP**.

There are two bills from Commerce in which we ask you to support the committee. **HB 1457**, allowing smoking in smoking bars, is an attempt to correct the unintended consequences of last year's smoking ban which removed an allowance for smoking cigars in cigar shops. Please **support** the committee report of **OTP/A**.

**HB 1553** would ban the sales of cigarettes through vending machines in NH. There are currently less than 200

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machines in the entire state and all are equipped with locking-out devices that prevent underage users from acquiring cigarettes. Passage of this bill would cost the state close to \$1M annually at a time when this revenue stream is already under-performing. Please **support** the committee report of **ITL**.

### Internet Safety

Unfortunately, the Education committee voted to kill **HB 1483**, which would require instruction in Internet safety. This was a Republican Office initiative to help protect our school-aged children from predators. This bill was also supported by Symantec, a corporation responsible for many of the anti-virus programs that are used in home computers. The minority amendment would add guidelines to be adopted locally. Finally, the governor has assumed most of the credit in child protection in this state, and it is irresponsible not to consider all options of child safety, even if proposed by the opposite party. We ask you to **oppose** the report of **ITL** and **support** the minority report of **OTP/A**.

### Charter School Funding

A bill that was cosponsored by members of our Republican leadership team, **HB 1642**, would help equalize the amount of money received by our charter schools. It has long been our position that charter schools are public schools and should be funded accordingly, and this bill, as amended, would help to do that. Please **support** the Education committee report of **OTP/A**.

### Special Order Bills

There were two bills from Resources, Recreation and Development that were special ordered to Wednesday that we'd like to call your attention to.

**HB 1154**, establishes a commission to study flooding in the town of Bradford, specifically Lake Massasecum, Lake Todd, and the watershed. It is unnecessary to establish yet another commission to study a problem that has already been sufficiently studied. Further studies would quite simply arrive at the same conclusion as one completed by the Army Corps of Engineers following the flood of April, 1987. Their recommendations would cost the state in excess of \$12M. We ask you to **support** the Majority Report of **ITL**.

**HB 1264** is an "unintended consequence" of legislation that we passed in 2005, which negated the Department of Resources and Economic Development's (DRED) ability to consider ATVs on snow-covered trails, as snowmobiles. The Federal Highway Administration offered three options that would allow DRED to con-

## Special Election



On **March 11** there will be a special election for state representative in Hillsborough, District 7 (Goffstown & Weare) to fill the vacancy left with the passing of former Representative Bruce Hunter.

The Republican candidate is Gary Hopper, a former two-term representative who served in the House from 2000-04. To help us elect a fellow Republican, please call the House Republican Office at 271-3665, or the State Republican Party Headquarters at 225-9341.

Please give us a call and let us know which days and times you are available to help make phone calls for the candidate.

tinue to allow ATVs on rail trails but the department chose to apply for a waiver and they are currently awaiting a decision. Even if a waiver is granted, this bill would prohibit the use of ATVs on rail trails. We ask that you **support** a **Minority amendment** that will be offered by Rep. Chris Ahlgren.

### Donor Towns Return!

The language adopted by Democrats for adequacy has finally produced some new numbers. The plan creates **37 donor towns**, which we finally were able to eliminate in the previous biennium, who are responsible for sending more than \$15.5M back to the state. The plan reduces grants to the five Claremont lawsuit communities by \$5M, sends more than \$10M to four so-called "wealthy" towns and reduces grants to our working-class cities and towns throughout the state by more than \$25M, including \$7.5M for the Town of Derry alone! According to Deputy Republican Leader David Hess, a member of the Education committee, "The proposed plan is ridiculous, embarrassing, and grossly unfair."

It is clear that we have a lot of work ahead of us on this issue. As Republicans we must continue to stick together! Let's have a good turnout at the caucus.

*Mike*