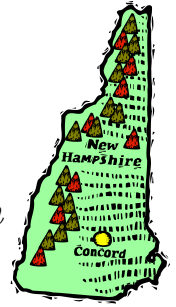


# State House Bulletin

*A Granite State Progress Publication*



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Weekly, Legislative Session January - June

Friday, April 8th, 2011

## O'Brien's House: No Dissent, No Compromises

It is now halfway through the legislative calendar, and the true character of Speaker O'Brien's House has become clear. Leadership will brook no dissent from Republicans and Democratic ideas will not even be considered.

The House has become a place where outright insults and disrespect are not just tolerated, but encouraged. When House Majority Leader D.J. Bettencourt took issue that the Catholic Bishop dared to voice religious social justice teachings in protest of deep service cuts, the Speaker supported Bettencourt exploiting a dark time in the Church's history to distract from the real issue.

Not surprising, as O'Brien himself berated moderate Rep. Susan Emerson to tears for caring about the state's most vulnerable and stripped conservative Rep. Lee Quandt of his committee membership in retribution for pro-worker votes. In this House, only loyalists allowed.

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## Week in Review: Majority Leader's Insults Incite Controversy, Rebuke from NH GOP; Rep Quandt Booted from Finance for Criticizing Policy

### *State House Happenings* *Week of April 4th-April 8th*

#### *Budget Briefings Reveal Dangerous Shortfalls, Damage to Safety Net*

#### *Right-to-Work-for Less Hearing Draws Hundreds, Attacks on Labor Continue*

#### **GOP Rep Booted from Committee for Speaking Out**

Rep. Lee Quandt (R-Exeter), was removed from his key Finance Committee seat, in retaliation for votes cast against the House budget and its anti-worker provisions. Rep. Quandt also voiced his concerns about constant GOP attacks on public-sector workers on his [blog](#). The House budget slashes public-sector jobs and pensions, and recklessly puts the state's most vulnerable in danger. [Click here for more budget info \(NHFPI\)](#).

#### **Budget Briefings Outline Damage**

The Finance Committee presented briefings to the full House on the budget adopted by the committee. One short week after a 5,000-strong protest (the largest in over 25 years), the committee blithely presented a litany of essential services to be

cut so that O'Brien's arbitrary spending target could be met. Although Rep. Neal Kurk (R-Weare) Division III Subcommittee Chair, claimed in his presentation that it was the committee's recommendation that funds in excess of the House's ridiculously low revenue estimates be used to restore essential services, his own amendment shows that assertion to be a lie: it spells out in black and white that instead tabled tax breaks for business will be revived and enacted first. Too bad, middle class.

#### **Manufacturers, Legal Experts: RTW is Unwanted, Unworkable**

HB 474-FN testimony from the largest sheet metal manufacturers in the state made clear that small business owners prefer the predictable, reasonable process of negotiating with one exclusive bargaining unit, and do not want to deal with the chaos promised by the last-minute amendment tacked onto this ill-considered bill. Legal experts testified that the amendment, which attempts to deal with the free-rider problem by eliminating the exclusive bargaining rights and responsibilities of unions to protect unaffiliated workers, would in-

*(Continued on page 2)*

## What's Coming Up at the State House

**MONDAY, April 11, 2011**

**9:00 a.m. SENATE FINANCE, Room 103 State House (SH)** DHHS presentations on House budget (continued from last Friday). Various divisions from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., executive session may follow.

**TUESDAY, April 12, 2011**

**10:00 a.m. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY, Room 204, LOB**

**SB 52-FN**, excluding persons convicted of violent crimes and sexually violent persons from mandatory early release on probation or parole. **1:00 p.m. SB 88**, relative to physical force in defense of a person and relative to the brandishing of a firearm or other means of self-defense. **Executive session may follow.**

**10:00 a.m. EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 306,**

*(Continued on page 2)*

(NEXT WEEK, Continued from page 1)

**LOB SB 33-FN**, relative to retired state employee contributions for medical benefits costs. **10:45 a.m. SB 152-FN**, relative to participation in state employees' group insurance by members of the general court. **11:30 a.m. SB 81-FN**, relative to powers and duties of commissioners of executive branch agencies, and relative to the extension of the expired term of a commissioner or agency head. **Executive session may follow.**

**1:00 p.m. ELECTION LAW**, Room 308, **LOB HB 129-FN**, relative to presenting photo identification to vote in person and relative to the election fund. **Executive session may follow.** [Take action! Click here for more info \(America Votes\).](#)

### WEDNESDAY, April 13, 2011

**10:00 a.m.** Full House in Session, Reps Hall. Votes on Senate bills. See full legislative calendar for details.

### THURSDAY, April 14th, 2011

**9:30 a.m. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION FUNDING REFORM**, Rooms 210-211, **LOB** Full committee work session on **CACR 14**, relating to public education. Providing that the general court shall have the authority to define standards for public education, establish standards of account-

ability, mitigate local disparities in educational opportunity and fiscal capacity, and shall have full discretion to determine the amount of state funding for education.

**10:30 a.m.** Or immediately following work session, executive session on **CACR 14**. [Click here for news article \(Portsmouth Herald\).](#)

**10:00 a.m. EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 306, LOB SB 33-FN**, relative to retired state employee contributions for medical benefits costs. **10:45 a.m. SB 152-FN**, relative to participation in state employees' group insurance by members of the general court. **11:30 a.m. SB 81-FN**, relative to powers and duties of commissioners of executive branch agencies, and relative to the extension of the expired term of a commissioner or agency head. **Executive session may follow.**

**1:00 p.m. SENATE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Room 100, SH HB 442-FN**, relative to the use of marijuana for medicinal purposes.

### Other Worthwhile Upcoming New Hampshire Events:

#### Cheese, Chocolate, and Change

**Saturday, April 9th 5:30—7:30 p.m.** IBEW Function Hall 48 Airport Road, Concord. Join NH Citizens Alliance for the Annual Cheese and Chocolate Event, honoring local activists and legislators who fight for social and economic justice in our communities. Visit [NHCA's Facebook page](#) for more info and to RSVP.

#### Canvasses, Phone Banks, District Meetings and Rallies

With so much happening at the State House, organizations and communities have come together to host events across the state. [Protect NH Families](#)—again, on Facebook—has listings for many of these events. Be sure to check the main page where others may post upcoming activities.

(WEEK IN REVIEW, Continued from page 1)

stead create a paradoxical "[legal no man's land](#)" which would open the door to endless legal challenges, making this a great jobs bill— for lawyers.

### Retirement Benefit Theft Bill Rejected

**HB 231** was voted ITL unanimously by the Senate Executive Departments & Administrative Committee. The bill would have set an arbitrary limit of \$27.5 million on the amount of General Funds that could be used to pay health care costs for retired state employees -- a 30% reduction at a time when more people are entering retirement monthly. Many are considering early retirement because they feel terrorized by the reckless actions being promoted by the House Leadership.

### It Still Stings

Rep. Jeanine Notter (R-Merrimack) appears to still be stinging from having been caught [on camera](#) suggesting that community fundraisers are a feasible solution for dealing with the cost of cancer treatments. A letter-[to-the-editor](#) that ran last weekend reminded people of the comments and rehashed images of our bake sale on the State House steps—with \$10,000 cookies.

Smarting from the reminder, Rep. Notter posted unflattering comments through her proxy Rep. Seth Cohn (R-Canterbury). We say: thanks for keeping the story going!

### Video Clip of the Week

Rep. Stella Tremblay (R-Auburn) unintentionally fired up the crowd during Tuesday's Senate Commerce Committee hearing on **HB 474-FN**, NH's Right to Work for Less bill. Rep. Tremblay ranted for several minutes, calling union leaders "parasites," and generally behaving so poorly as to draw cries from the public attending and two rebukes from committee Chair Senator Prescott. You can view her amazingly awful performance and other State House Video at <http://www.youtube.com/user/GraniteStateProgress>.

## Links and Information

### General Court (NH House and Senate)

[www.gencourt.state.nh.us](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us)

Look here for the full text and status of bills, legislative calendars, journals of record, roll call votes, and contact information for your state representatives.

### Executive Council

<http://www.nh.gov/council/>

NH's five-member elected Executive Council works with the Governor to oversee the affairs of the state.

### Legislative Lingo

<http://www.granitestateprogress.org/new-hampshire-state-house.html>

Read our handy legislative guide.