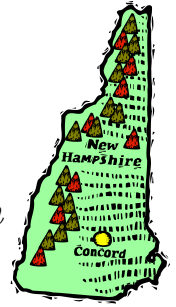


# State House Bulletin

A Granite State Progress Publication



Volume I, Issue 7

Weekly, Legislative Session January - June

Friday, March 25th, 2011

## Transparency, Due Process Gone with Wind

This Thursday, we were subjected to shocking displays of disrespect and grave breaches of decorum during the Finance Committee Executive Session.

[General Court Ethics Guidelines](#) state "Legislators should assure that government is conducted openly, equitably and honorably in a manner that permits the citizenry to make informed judgments and hold government officials accountable."

Is it open to introduce amendments to a budget in the dark of night, without a public hearing? Is it honorable to tell voters to "shut up" as Chairman Weyler (R-Kingston) did or call them "thugs" as Rep. Vallaincourt (R-Manchester) did? And why was the public denied the right to have the meeting moved to a larger room to accommodate the entire crowd?

The amendment to strip public workers of collective bargaining rights and undermine unions and middle class families drew heat as it should have. Legislators should have been prepared to respond honorably.

Timothy McKernan  
Intern Editor, UNH Manchester

4 Park Street, Suite 301  
Concord, NH 03301  
Office: (603) 225-2471  
[info@granitestateprogress.org](mailto:info@granitestateprogress.org)  
[www.GraniteStateProgress.org](http://www.GraniteStateProgress.org)  
Facebook: [GraniteStateProgress](#)  
YouTube: [GraniteStateProgress](#)  
Twitter: [ProgressNH](#)

## Week in Review: Finance Committee Passes Budget, Destructive Amendment Despite Protest, Lack of Review — Response Planned

### State House Happenings Week of March 21st-March 25th

#### Disastrous Budget Goes to Full House

#### Essential Services Slashed, Eliminated; New Hampshire's Middle Class, Most Vulnerable to Suffer

HB 1, HB 2: FINANCE Finding the Governor's already drastic budget cuts insufficient, Finance passed a budget with even deeper cuts on to the full House for a vote next week. House revenue estimates project nearly zero growth for the upcoming biennium. [Click here for more info \(NH Fiscal Policy Institute\)](#).

The budget endangers the elderly, children, rape victims ... the list is long and the impact serious. DHHS Commissioner Nick Toumpas stated in a legislative briefing that proposed cuts would impact our most vulnerable populations. He likened the budget to a game of Jenga®, stating that as each piece is removed from our vital support systems, "I don't know when it's going to fall." Numerous support agency representatives testified at public hearings that already-strained services will be unable to prevent increased deaths and that crime

will also increase as at-risk youth will be underserved.

An amendment to the bill states that any revenue above and beyond the current low-level predictions will be applied to tax breaks for businesses, rather than restoring essential services.

HB 1 and HB 2 are scheduled for a full House vote next week. See below in the calendar section for information about a rally being planned in response.

#### \$80 Million in Business Tax Cuts Passed in One Day

Meanwhile, the House found it in their hearts to pass more than \$80 million in business tax giveaways—in just one day.

After reviewing roll call votes from the week prior, there is an apparent and alarming trend of the House choosing corporations over the middle class. HB 156 reduces the rate of the tobacco tax, a move sure to please Philip Morris USA and other big tobacco. Less enthusiastic are cancer patients and advocates, as well as anyone concerned about funding other essential services in

(Continued on page 2)

## What's Coming Up at the State House

\*Massive [State House Rally Thursday](#)\*  
\*Thousands to Attend\*

Thursday is Last Day For Bills to Pass House or Senate Before Crossing Over to Other Chamber.

TUESDAY, MARCH 29th, 2011

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Representatives Hall: Finance Committee hosts budget briefings on HB 1-A, making appropria-

tions for the expenses of certain departments of the state for fiscal years ending June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2013 and HB 2 -FN-A, relative to state fees, funds, revenues, and expenditures.

9:30 a.m. SENATE PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, Room 101, LOB HB 185-FN, relative to determining bargaining units for purposes of public employee collective bargaining.

(Continued on page 2)

(NEXT WEEK, Continued from page 1)

**10:00 a.m.** SENATE PUBLIC AND MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, Room 101, LOB **HB 70**, relative to changes to town charters.

**1:00 p.m.** SENATE EDUCATION, Room 103, LOB **HB 130**, establishing an additional method for a school to demonstrate that it provides the opportunity for an adequate education.

**1:50 p.m.** SENATE EDUCATION, Room 103, LOB **HB 164**, requiring legislative approval for the adoption of the common core state standards in New Hampshire.

**2:00 p.m.** HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS, Room 202, LOB **SB 130-FN-A**, repealing the tax on gambling winnings. Executive session may follow.

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30th, 2011

**9:00 a.m.** House Meets in Session. See [full calendar](#) for complete list. There are several bills scheduled for full House vote on both Wednesday & Thursday.

**FINANCE: HB1-A**, making appropriations for the expenses of certain departments of the state for fiscal years ending June 30, 2012 and June 30, 2013. MAJORITY: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. MINORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE. **HB 2-FN-A-L**, relative to state fees, funds, revenues,

and expenditures. MAJORITY: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. MINORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

**HB 519-FN**, repealing New Hampshire's regional greenhouse gas initiative cap and trade program for controlling carbon dioxide emissions. MAJORITY: OUGHT TO PASS. MINORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSIONS REFORM: HB 580-FN-L**, relative to the New Hampshire retirement system. MAJORITY: OUGHT TO PASS WITH AMENDMENT. MINORITY: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011

**10:00 A.M.** Senate Meets in Session. See [full calendar](#) for complete list of votes scheduled for the Senate floor.

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS: CACR 14**, relating to funding public education. Providing that the general court shall define reasonable standards for elementary and secondary public education, establish reasonable standards of accountability, and mitigate local disparities in educational opportunity and fiscal capacity. Ought to Pass with Amendment, Vote 3-1.

### THURSDAY, MARCH 31st, 2011

**9:00 a.m.** House Meets in Session.

**10:20 a.m.** SENATE EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION, Room 100, SH **HB 231-FN**, (New Title) relative to payment of medical benefits for state retirees, their spouses, and dependents.

**11:00 a.m.** SENATE TRANSPORTATION, Room 103, LOB **HB 218**, repealing the New Hampshire rail transit authority.

**1:00 p.m.** SENATE FINANCE, Room 103, SH **HB 113**, (New Title) prohibiting the use of state funds for New Hampshire public television.

(WEEK IN REVIEW, Continued from page 1)

New Hampshire—which will see cuts in direct correlation to these business tax giveaways.

The House also passed HB 213, which reduces the rate of the business profits tax, and HB 557, relative to the standards and burden of proof with respect to the business profits tax deduction for reasonable compensation attributable to owners of partnerships, limited liability companies, and sole proprietorships.

Essentially: extreme members of the House are trying to underfund New Hampshire and move toward privatization of core state services, i.e. road maintenance, public safety such as police and fire, strong education systems, etc. while also leaving behind the mental health and disability communities, temporary assistance programs for the unemployed, and other such services. The middle class and most vulnerable in New Hampshire are taking a large hit in this budget. [Click here for more info \(NH Cares\)](#).

### **Midnight Anti-Union Amendment Passes Finance**

As if the above attacks weren't enough, the Finance Committee went a step further with a "Midnight Cowboy" amendment.

Late Tuesday night, after most observers and cameras had gone home, Rep. Neal Kurk (R-) introduced an omnibus amendment to HB 2 FN-A-L that effectively eliminates bargaining rights for public employees at the close of their contract if another one has not been adopted yet. Already lacking the right to strike, this bill would leave them at the mercy of officials, and opens the door to cronyism and influence-peddling as these jobs are instead sold to the highest bidder. Breaking unions also serves another purpose: less organized resistance to the above cuts to essential services.

Public workers & community members were quick to comment on the Wisconsin-styled attack. [See news article for more coverage \(Concord Monitor\)](#).

## 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.