

HOUSE REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATION SHEET



“TRUST BUT VERIFY”

The purpose of the House Republican Alliance is to preserve and strengthen the traditional principles and values of the Republican Party through the NH House of Representatives and throughout the state of NH, including fiscal restraint, personal freedom and responsibility, small government, free enterprise and strong families. We offer the following recommendations based on those principles, the Republican Party Platform, and the NH and Federal Constitutions.

Bill Number	Committee	Committee Vote	HRA recommends
SB 203	HHS	Interim Study 12-4	Oppose Interim Study
SB 228	Municipal & County	Interim Study 14-5	Oppose ITL
SB 241	Ways & Means	OTP/A 16-3	Oppose OTP/A
SB 246	Transportation	OTP 9-3	No recommendation
SB 247	Transportation	OTP/A 12-0	No recommendation
SB 248	Transportation	OTP/A 11-1	Oppose OTP/A
SB 259	Ways & Means	OTP 16-3	Oppose OTP
SB 281	Science	OTP/A 8-4	Oppose OTP/A
SB 329	Commerce	ITL 8-7	Oppose ITL
SB 346	Commerce	OTP/A 14-2	Support OTP/A
SB 366	Ways & Means	ITL 11-9	Support ITL
SB 370	Finance	ITL 18-2	No recommendation
SB 371	HHS	OTP 13-4	Oppose OTP
SB 391	Finance	OTP/A 20-0	Support OTP/A

WEDNESDAY MAY 7

Reconsideration

WAYS AND MEANS

SB 366-FN-A-L, relative to video lottery and table gaming. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP/A. Vote 11-9.**

HRA Analysis: This is a two-casino gambling bill. The platform says we “Reject expanded casino and video lottery gambling as a means to balance the budget or increase spending,” and the minority report makes it clear that this bill is all about the revenue. For those tempted to vote for reconsideration and against the ITL “to hear the amendments,” please consider the likelihood of passing your preferred amendment this year.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose reconsideration, support ITL.

REGULAR CALENDAR

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

SB 329-FN, relative to advertising alcoholic beverages on billboards. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP. Vote 8-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill allows alcohol advertising on billboards, with all the same content restrictions as other forms of advertising. Billboards advertising alcohol are also forbidden near schools. The Platform, Part I, urges us to “minimize business regulations,” and this does.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose ITL.

SB 346, relative to rectifiers. **OTP/A. Vote 14-2.**

HRA Analysis: This clarifies definitions and establishes that rectifiers (who flavor, blend, and/or age liquor, rather than distilling it) have the same limitations on sampling as distillers. The Platform, Part I, urges us to “minimize business regulations,” and this does.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.

FINANCE

SB 370, reimbursement of towns affected by the Merrimack River flood control compact and appropriating therefor. **ITL. Vote 18-2.**

HRA Analysis: Massachusetts and New Hampshire have a compact that keeps otherwise usable land in New Hampshire unbuilt so that the Merrimack River will not flood in Massachusetts. Massachusetts is supposed to pay the affected New Hampshire towns for this service in lieu of the property taxes they would otherwise collect on this land. At some point they stopped paying, and New Hampshire partly made the towns whole while negotiating with Massachusetts. This settlement, which was agreed to by all parties, made a partial payment to the state for the years 2009-2012, and the state made payments to the towns for three of those years. This bill would forward most of the settlement to the towns, putting all of the underpayment on the state. Your position on the bill would depend on whether you think that the state or the towns should eat most of the loss.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

SB 391, (New Title) relative to the juvenile justice advisory board; the policies and procedures of the youth development center; and a reduction in appropriation to the Sununu Youth Services Center. **OTP/A. Vote 20-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill deals with juvenile justice and its jail (Sununu). The Sununu Center is perhaps the most expensive such facility in the country. It is widely acknowledged to be mismanaged and overstaffed. In the last session, as a way of addressing these problems, juvenile justice was merged into DCYF. This resulted in monetary savings from the elimination of duplicate functions. As previously passed by the House, this bill would undo the merger and create a new unclassified director, appointed by the Governor and Council. The committee amendment keeps the merger in place, and make the director's position appointed by and reporting to the HHS Commissioner. This should improve the management situation, while keeping the savings. The bill also reasonably adjusts the back of the budget cut for Sununu to be more heavily weighted in FY 2015 compared to FY 2014. As the platform, Part II, says we need to “justify expenditures against measurable benefits” and splitting the department back up would result in a measurable loss.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.

HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND ELDERLY AFFAIRS

SB 203, relative to permissible uses of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. **MAJ: INTERIM STUDY. MIN: OTP. Vote 12-4.**

HRA Analysis: This bill simply forbids use of EBT cards, or cash from EBT cards, for various products, as we already forbid EBT card usage in strip clubs, liquor stores, or gambling dens. Because there is no automatic way to control cash purchases, this essentially sets our expectations of what public assistance will be used for. Since the Platform is based on individual liberty and responsibility, it is our position that public assistance is a hand up, not a handout, and we expect the recipients to be as frugal with our money as we would be in similar circumstances.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose Interim Study, support OTP.

SB 371-FN, (New Title) requiring the establishment of a senior citizens bill of rights. **OTP. Vote 13-4.**

HRA Analysis: No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

SB 228, (New Title) relative to notice of changes to zoning districts. **MAJ: INTERIM STUDY. MIN: ITL. Vote 14-5.**

HRA Analysis: This bill requires better notification of zoning changes, since a legal notice in the newspaper is not really “notice” for most people these days. The platform supports private property rights, and notice of zoning changes that might affect the value of your property is the least that landowners deserve.

HRA Recommendation: No recommendation on interim study, oppose ITL.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY

SB 281-FN, relative to the siting of wind turbines. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 8-4.**

HRA Analysis: This bill started out as a simple set of criteria for evaluating the siting of large wind power projects. The committee amendment adds an extra layer of criteria to be considered for all power plants, not just wind turbines. It is redundant, since these factors are already considered by the site evaluation committee, and the bill creates a duplicate rulemaking authority. The Platform, Part I, urges us to “keep state government lean” and this bill adds more bureaucracy that will be paid for by energy producers, increasing the already high cost of electricity in the state.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP, oppose committee amendment, oppose OTP/A.

TRANSPORTATION

SB 246-FN, relative to penalties for speeding. **OTP. Vote 9-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill defines driving 100 mph or more as reckless driving, automatically subject to the current reckless driving fines (it's still a violation, but the minimum fine is \$500 for a first offense!) No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

SB 247, (New Title) relative to ignition interlock device violations and interlock device removal protocols. **OTP/A. Vote 12-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, clarifies how a person who has been required to have an interlock device installed on their vehicle can get it removed. No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

SB 248, a committee to study policies for state-owned abandoned rail corridors. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 11-1.**

HRA Analysis: The committee amendment to this otherwise harmless bill adds a photo enforcement process for toll evaders who go through the cash lanes, in addition to the current photo enforcement in the EZ Pass lanes. The undefined but probably significant cost of setting up this system, plus the invasion of privacy (photos of offenders will be kept indefinitely, even if it is an error) violate the Platform, part II: “protect the privacy of individuals from government snooping,” and “justify expenditures against measurable benefits.”

HRA Recommendation: No recommendation on OTP, oppose committee amendment, oppose OTP/A.

WAYS AND MEANS

SB 241, establishing the division of economic development fund. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 16-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill creates a new dedicated fund to accept gifts and grants, allowing DRED to spend more than its budgeted allotment. The Platform, Part II, requires we “prioritize programs to ensure effective spending,” and dedicated funds are intended to prevent this.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

SB 259, establishing a palliative care center for consumers and providers and appropriating a special fund. **OTP. Vote 16-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill creates a commission to educate consumers about palliative care, and a dedicated fund to pay for this education. The Platform, Part II, urges us to “privatize programs and functions that can be handled more effectively by the private sector,” and education on palliative care clearly fits the bill.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP.