

HOUSE REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATION SHEET



freedom

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 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.

“TRUST BUT VERIFY”

Bill Number	Committee	Committee Vote	HRA recommends
HB 110	Environment & Agriculture	OTP/A 11-6	Oppose OTP/A
HB 173	ED&A	OTP/A 10-9	Oppose OTP/A
HB 226	Commerce	OTP/A 17-3	No Recommendation
HB 249	Labor	ITL 11-8	No Recommendation
HB 326	ED&A	Interim Study 9-7	Oppose OTP/A
HB 331	Commerce	ITL 17-3	Support ITL
HB 336	Criminal Justice	ITL 16-0	Support ITL
HB 350	Labor	OTP/A 11-9	Oppose OTP/A
HB 427	Ways & Means	OTP/A 10-9	Oppose OTP/A
HB 461	HHS	OTP/A 16-1	No Recommendation
HB 473	ED&A	Interim Study 14-5	No Recommendation
HB 474	Education	OTP/A 11-7	Oppose OTP/A
HB 485	Ways & Means	OTP/A 14-5	No Recommendation
HB 492	Criminal Justice	ITL 11-7	No Recommendation
HB 562	Commerce	OTP/A 17-3	Oppose OTP/A
HB 569	Science & Energy	OTP/A 12-7	No Recommendation
HB 580	Science & Energy	ITL 13-6	No Recommendation
HB 582	Judiciary	OTP/A 10-6	Oppose OTP/A
HB 585	Commerce	OTP/A 11-9	Oppose OTP/A
HB 597	HHS	OTP/A 18-0	No Recommendation
HB 627	ED&A	ITL 12-7	Oppose ITL
HB 654	Ways & Means	OTP/A 19-0	Support OTP/A
HB 660	Environment & Agriculture	ITL 12-8	Support ITL
HB 675	Criminal Justice	OTP/A 10-8	Oppose OTP/A
SB 180	Commerce	No Recommendation	Oppose OTP
SB 190	Resources	OTP/A 16-2	No Recommendation

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15 REGULAR CALENDAR, PART ONE

HB 675-FN, authorizing and regulating the use of license plate scanning devices. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 10-7.**

HRA Analysis: Republicans support law enforcement and the rule of law. We also highly value individual freedom and everyone’s right to be free from constant surveillance by the state. Concerns about the loss of privacy and likely erosion of freedom of travel that

come with these devices dictate a conservative approach that falls on the side of individual liberty. The prohibition against broad, blanket searches and seizures is enshrined in the constitution. "Every subject hath a right to be secure from all unreasonable searches and seizures of his person, his houses, his papers, and all his possessions." (Part 1, Article 19)

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A, support ITL.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

HB 326-FN, relative to licensure of polysomnographers. **MAJ: INTERIM STUDY. MIN: OTP/A. Vote 9-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would create a mandatory license for yet another tiny, specialized profession, increasing the size and complexity of government in favor of a group that has national certification and no complaints or record of consumer harm. The Platform, Part I, reminds us to "minimize business regulations, licenses, and paperwork."

HRA Recommendation: Support Interim Study or ITL, oppose OTP/A,

LABOR, INDUSTRIAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

HB 350, prohibiting discrimination against the unemployed. **MAJORITY: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 11-8.**

HRA Analysis: The Platform, Part I, reminds us to "minimize business regulations, licenses, and paperwork." Employers should be able to choose from qualified applicants, not just applicants. What this bill tries to do is impossible to prove, and ultimately will force an additional financial burden on employers, who will need to defend themselves from frivolous allegations of discrimination.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A, Support ITL

RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SB 190-FN, relative to admission fees for certain persons at state parks and historical sites. **OTP/A. Vote 16-2.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, cuts back on some, but not all, of the special breaks and discounts granted over time to different interest groups. The state park system's operations are self-funded, primarily by fees, so the value of these discounts has to be made up by increased fees from those who are not members favored groups. There would be no free entrance and use of enterprise functions (example: ski lifts, The Flume) for seniors (admission to parks would still be free), and no free admission for legislators unless on state business. In addition, the cost of discounted admissions given to state employees via a collective bargaining agreement will be borne by the employing state agency, And finally, the bill repeals the statutory discount coupon program. No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: Vote your conscience.

REGULAR CALENDAR- PART TWO

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

HB 226, establishing a committee to study the promotion of New Hampshire wines. **OTP/A. Vote 17-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would require the Liquor Commission to promote New Hampshire wines. No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

HB 331, relative to wine manufacturers. **ITL. Vote 17-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would allow New Hampshire wine manufacturers to act as wholesalers of beer and wine, including that made by others, at a mandated, minimal markup, giving them a tremendous advantage over other wholesalers. The Constitution, Part 2. Art. 83, warns us that "Free and fair competition ... is an inherent and essential right of the people."

HRA Recommendation: Support ITL.

HB 562, relative to the interest rate on title loans. **OTP/A. Vote 17-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would increase title loan makers' reporting requirements, to both regulators and customers. The committee amendment deletes the interest rate limits that would make it impossible for title loan companies to operate. The Platform, Part I, reminds us to "minimize business regulations."

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

HB 585, relative to insurance parity for optometrists. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: INTERIM STUDY. Vote 11-9.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would require insurance companies to pay equally for optometrists and ophthalmologists, rather than allowing providers to negotiate their payments. The Platform, Part I, reminds us to "minimize business regulations."

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

SB 180, establishing a recovery fund for victims of the Financial Resources Mortgage (FRM) fraud and continually appropriating a special fund. **WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would pay restitution to investors caught in the FRM fraud, losing their investments after FRM went into

bankruptcy, primarily because the commercial real estate market collapsed. One of the Platform Principles is “free people, free markets, and free enterprise,” and having the state take responsibility for making these investors whole – absent clear evidence of official wrongdoing – completely violates this Principle.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

HB 492-FN-L, relative to the legalization and regulation of marijuana. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP/A. Vote 11-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would decriminalize marijuana, regulate its production and sale, similar to alcohol, and tax it heavily (\$30/ounce when delivered to a retailer, plus 15% of the retail price). The Platform warns us against new taxes and over-regulating businesses; on the other hand, decriminalizing simple possession would save the state a great deal of money, and as the Platform insists, “Low taxes are the result of low spending.”

HRA Recommendation: Vote your conscience.

EDUCATION

HB 474, relative to eligibility for in-state tuition rates at the university of New Hampshire. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 11-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would grant in-state tuition rates to illegal aliens, thereby declaring them to be lawful residents of New Hampshire. The Platform, Part IX, reminds us to “oppose any form of amnesty for illegal aliens”, and this would be amnesty.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A, support ITL.

ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE

HB 110, requiring persons who record cruelty to livestock to report such cruelty. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 11-6.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would require anyone who witnesses such a crime to report it to the police. While cruelty to animals is heinous, neither the Constitution nor the Platform justifies imposing such a new duty on our citizens.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

HB 660-FN, requiring the labeling of genetically engineered foods. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP/A. Vote 12-8.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would require labeling of foods sold in New Hampshire containing, or processed with, genetically engineered products, as defined in the bill. The Platform, Part I, reminds us to “minimize business regulations.”

HRA Recommendation: Support ITL.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

HB 173, repealing the authority for supplemental allowances in the judicial retirement plan. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 10-9.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, would quintuple the amount available used for one time payments. The state pays 75% of a judge's salary into the judicial retirement system now, and any further draining will only make it worse. As the Platform reminds us, “low taxes are the result of low spending.”

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

HB 473-FN, retirement system status of the university system police force. **MAJ: INTERIM STUDY. MIN: ITL. Vote 14-5.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would put the university police into the state retirement system as Group II (police/fire). On the one hand, more funds would flow into the system; on the other hand, more pensions would be due eventually and the university would have to spend more. In addition, the police must stay in Social Security, and Group II is designed for jobs that aren't in SS.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

HB 627-FN, considering accumulated leave as service time in calculating retirement benefits. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP. Vote 12-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would ensure that pensions are set by base salaries only, bringing the system marginally closer to the Constitutional mandate: “no pension shall be granted, but in consideration of actual services.” (Part I, Article 36)

HRA Recommendation: Oppose ITL.

HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES & ELDERLY AFFAIRS

HB 461-FN, relative to long-term care services. **OTP/A. Vote 16-1.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, raises the basic income level allowed to recipients of Medicaid long term care to the general Medicaid income level and requires HHS to confirm medical eligibility within 45 days of becoming financially eligible. No problem with the second part, and it's not clear how many more people will become eligible for Medicaid by the first change, since the cost of a nursing home (\$35K and up/year) swallows what income most medically eligible people receive. If there is any increased Medicaid spending, the most likely effect is to have split Federal/state funding replace county funding, not a decrease in personal spending.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

HB 597-FN, relative to mandatory drug testing for certain health care workers. **OTP/A. Vote 18-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, requires licensed health care facilities to establish a drug free workplace policy and outlines the elements needed to maintain licensure. One would hope that hospitals and other facilities would have such a policy already, but the recent problems at Exeter Hospital revealed that they didn't. While the Platform warns against over-regulation, the health care field is so regulated already that requiring a policy most people would assume to be necessary is a negligible mandate.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

JUDICIARY

HB 582, repealing early offers for medical injury claims. **MAJ: OTP/A. MIN: ITL. Vote 10-6.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, significantly changes the early offer program passed in 2012, which has not yet been used. While the HRA took no position on the early offer program itself, making this sort of change before we can find out how it works just wastes everyone's time and energy.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A

LABOR, INDUSTRIAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

HB 249-FN, requiring employers to verify an employee's eligibility to work in the USA. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP/A. Vote 11-8.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, with the minority amendment, only applies to state departments, and requires them to participate in E-Verify or an equivalent status verification system, so as to verify the work eligibility status of all new employees. The Platform, Part IX, calls for enforcing immigration laws; however, Part II requires us to protect the privacy of individuals against government snooping, and the multiple databases interfacing through E-verify threaten our privacy.

HRA Recommendation: Vote your conscience.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY

HB 569, relative to the placement of all new electric transmission lines in New Hampshire. **MAJ: OTP/A . MIN: ITL. Vote 12-7.**

HRA Analysis: This bill recommends new power lines to be placed in existing rights of way as much as possible. No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

HB 580, establishing moratoriums on wind turbine plants and electric transmission line projects. **MAJ: ITL. MIN: OTP. Vote 13-6.**

HRA Analysis: This bill prohibits the Site Evaluation Committee from approving any new wind turbine power plants or transmission lines until the state has completed its comprehensive energy policy. No Platform or Constitutional issues identified.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

WAY AND MEANS

HB 427, relative to tobacco tax laws. **MAJ: OTP/A . MIN: ITL. Vote 10-9.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, clarifies tobacco tax laws. One "clarification" is to define premium cigars (which are exempt from taxes) such that some will be taxed, violating the constitutional requirement for proportional taxes. (Part 2, Art 5)

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

HB 485-FN-A, establishing keno. **MAJ: OTP/A . MIN: ITL. Vote 14-5.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, allows any licensed establishment to offer keno, an electronic lottery. On the one hand, the Platform warns against gambling; on the other, this will help our businesses flourish.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation.

HB 654-FN, relative to licensure and renewal fees. **OTP/A . Vote 19-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, as amended, sets license fees for a group of small boards in statute to cover the estimated cost of running the boards. These fees have previously been set in rules and the new levels are nearly all decreases, some significant (from \$450 to \$110) or small increases (from \$50 to \$55). Eliminating the rulemaking to set fees and physically consolidating the staff is expected to decrease costs without affecting performance. The Platform, Part I, urges us to "keep state government lean."

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.