

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.



REGULAR CALENDAR – PART I WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21 CHILDREN AND FAMILY LAW

SB 396-FN, limiting the use of child restraint practices in schools and treatment facilities. **MAJORITY: OTP/A. MINORITY: INTERIM STUDY. Vote 10-5.**

HRA Analysis: More rules for out public schools, more state control and further reduction of local control of education and local government in general. Our party understands that the best government is local government and that people in general will be able to bring their own local solutions to whatever problems, if any, this bill seeks to address.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A; Support Interim Study or, better yet, ITL.

EDUCATION

SB 486-FN-L, relative to the school building aid program. **MAJORITY: OTP/A. MINORITY: ITL. Vote 12-4.**

HRA Analysis: This bill places a 1 year moratorium on state provided building aid to local communities under the impression that it will reduce state expenditures over the next three years. The financial difficulties being experienced in the administration of the program that are addressed in this bill are the result of the policy mistake that was made in bonding our school building aid. It nonetheless reduces state spending at a time that the state sorely needs to do just that.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.

SB 512-FN, relative to the community college system of New Hampshire. **OTP. Vote 17-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill reduces the state’s regulations of the Community College system. Less state regulation is always good and should be support by Republicans.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

SB 361-FN, relative to benefits related to service of certain part-time district court justices and judges of probate retiring because of permanent disability. **ITL. Vote 12-5.**

HRA Analysis: The Constitution, Part 1, Article 36 “*no pension shall be granted, but in consideration of actual services; and such pensions ought to be granted with great caution, by the legislature, and never for more than one year at a time*”. We finesse this constitutional ban by every year funding the pensions that have been earned that year, but SB361 would grant a lifetime pension to the widow of a former judge who never contributed to the retirement system.

HRA Recommendation: Support ITL.

SB 453, relative to air quality in ice rinks. **MAJORITY: OTP. MINORITY: ITL. Vote 11-6.**

HRA Analysis: The Constitution, Part 1, Article 28-a forbids unfunded mandates on municipalities, which this bill would impose on municipality-owned ice rinks. In addition, the Platform, Section VI, states we must “*prevent over-regulation of business*”, and this sort of silly regulation is just what is meant.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP, Support ITL.

LABOR, INDUSTRIAL AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

SB 501-FN, relative to worksharing benefits under the unemployment compensation law, and relative to training grants. **OTP/A. Vote 11-0.**

HRA Analysis: Our platform calls for creating a supportive business climate. A part of that business climate is preserving the employer-employee relationship. This bill would create a program to avert layoffs by allowing employers to submit a plan to the Department of Employment Security to reduce their workforce hours by 10% to 50% for a period of up to 26 weeks, allowing those employees to collect unemployment benefits for the days they are not working. The cost of this work-share program is less than the cost of total layoffs and will help preserve the unemployment compensation trust fund. The bill also provides the transfer of additional funds to the job training fund to better prepare or enhance the skills needed by workers to perform certain jobs.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.

LOCAL AND REGULATED REVENUES

SB 181-FN-A, repealing the transfer of liquor enforcement to the department of safety and establishing a committee to study the administrative structure and adjudicative process at the liquor commission. **OTP. Vote 18-1.**

HRA Analysis: First of all, no one testified against this bill. Liquor enforcement activities worked well under the liquor commission oversight. Other states have transferred the oversight to their state safety departments and it has not worked. Those states are trying return to the liquor commission oversight model. The transfer of oversight to the DOS was a situation of trying to fix something that wasn't broken. Repeal would restore the liquor enforcement activities back to the more effective and efficient practices. The second part of the bill that establishes a study committee offends the platform position that counsels low taxes are a result of low spending. Inefficient government and unnecessary committee increase spending and drive higher taxes.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP.

SB 489-FN-A-L, relative to table gaming and video lottery at certain locations throughout the state and relative to the recovery of horse racing. **MAJORITY: ITL. MINORITY: OTP/A. Vote 13-7.**

HRA Analysis: The Platform, Part VIII, commits NH Republicans to opposing casino and video gaming. There are other reasons as well to oppose this bill. It creates a monopoly by specifying the locations and sizes of the sites for permitted casinos and expanded gaming facilities and not allowing others to engage in this business by excluding the rest of the state and citizens from operating expanded gaming facilities, all in violation of Part 2, Article 83 of the NH Constitution. It has express direction for dedicated funds, which is against the platform. It provides for a steep penalty (\$20K) for a minor who gambles, arguably an unreasonable fine or penalty, which is in violation of Article 33 of the Constitution. It funds the Democrats' spendthrift ways.

HRA Recommendation: Support ITL; Oppose OTP/A.

SB 490-FN, allowing historical racing. **ITL. Vote 14-5.**

HRA Analysis: The platform does not support expanded gaming. These historical racing machines are akin to slot machines in that they look and can be played as slot machines. This is nothing more than a clever attempt to introduce slots into the state, thus opening the door to expanded gaming.

HRA Recommendation: Support ITL.

SB 492-FN-L, extending the local property tax exemption for wooden poles and conduits. **MAJORITY: ITL. MINORITY: OTP/A. Vote 15-4.**

HRA Analysis: As our party platform counsels, low taxes are the result of low spending. Before we consider adjustments of the tax burden, state government needs to bring its spending under control. Now is not the time for Republicans to raise taxes on our constituents. They, and not telephone companies, will pay the group coming up with the money to pay this tax. Telephone land line companies pay separate taxes from utility companies so a tax equity argument does not stand up on analysis. Telephone companies also are required to make their poles available to CATV companies, who would not have the tax directly imposed on them.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose ITL; Support OTP/A.

RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SB 382, relative to the New Hampshire natural plant protection act. **OTP/A. Vote 16-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill increases the scope of the New Hampshire Native Plant Protection Act to include "exemplary natural communities" of more common plants as well as endangered or protected plants. It also

changes the fee structure to reflect the cost of providing the service rather than a flat rate. The bill presents a conflict against the platform's stand against new or increased taxes (such as agency fees) and out party's tradition of promoting conservation.

HRA Recommendation: No Recommendation

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY

SB 73-FN, requiring the state government to reduce energy consumption in state buildings, to develop an energy conservation plan, and to make an annual report on the state's energy consumption. **MAJORITY: OTP/A. MINORITY: ITL. Vote 13-4.**

HRA Analysis: Our party's platform reminds us that low taxes are the result of low spending. Requiring state agencies to take on unnecessary administrative and reporting burdens so that the "big government" advocates can feel they are doing something, when that something is already being performed, is just the sort of unnecessary, state-job-creation initiative that needs to be controlled if government spending is to be brought under control and lower taxes, leaving people with more of their own money, is to be achieved.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A; Support ITL.

STATE FEDERAL RELATIONS AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

SB 509, establishing the New Hampshire medal of honor fund and repealing the New Hampshire service award. **MAJORITY: OTP. MINORITY: ITL. Vote 12-2.**

HRA Analysis: It appears that the current Democrat administration has failed entirely to carry out a legislative directive to establish a NH medal of honor and this bill addresses that failure. Republicans should support this effort to honor our veterans.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP.

REGULAR CALENDAR – PART II

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21

COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

SB 452-FN, relative to jurisdiction over certain health insurers. **ITL. Vote 15-3.**

HRA Analysis: NH Republicans should support the Republican-sponsored bill that addresses the increased cost of health care insurance by allowing insurer competition across state lines. Unlike our state-oriented opponents, Republicans believe in free markets and know that industry, if left free to compete, will solve the unnecessarily high cost of insurance cost by government regulations and mandates.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose ITL; Support OTP.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

SB 500-FN, implementing changes in the probation, parole, and sentencing of certain offenders in an effort to increase public safety, strengthen community supervision, and reduce recidivism. **OTP/A. Vote 16-2.**

HRA Analysis: This bill, understood by some to better named the "Embezzlers' Early Release Act," is founded on the age-old misconception that there aren't criminals, just the misunderstood, uneducated and class-oppressed who need intensive government services. As such, the bill is a stalking horse for reduced sentences, coddling criminals and more social programs. Our party platform recognizes that society needs to be protected from criminals, not that criminals need to be protected from society's punishment for their wrongful conduct. Moreover, the bill would overburden an already broken parole/probation system.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP/A.

EDUCATION

SJR 3, in support of the New England secondary school consortium. **OTP. Vote 9-5.**

HRA Analysis: It seems that it isn't sufficient that the state take over our local education, now the careerists wish to turn it over to multi-state groups. The farther education of children is removed from their parents, the worse it is. In conformity with our party platform's principle of local control and local government, Republicans should oppose this bill.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP; Support ITL.

RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SB 411, relative to permitting of large groundwater withdrawals. **MAJORITY: OTP/A. MINORITY: ITL. Vote 16-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill is intended to clarify that the state is the sole issuer of large ground water withdrawal permits and thereby would reduce regulation on this beleaguered industry.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP/A.

SB 426, relative to the classification of Pleasant Lake. **OTP. Vote 19-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill would require Pleasant Lake in Deerfield and its tributaries to meet the highest state water quality standards to a level that would allow the lake to be used as a water supply. It could potentially add to the financial burdens of those surrounding and in the watershed for Pleasant Lake. Republicans are the original conservationists and yet we need to be cognizant of over-regulation, which this bill might allow.

HRA Recommendation: Vote Your Conscience.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND ENERGY

SB 397-FN, relative to public utilities commission assessments for the expenses of the consumer advocate. **OTP. Vote 14-3.**

HRA Analysis: This bill allows what will effectively be an indirect tax on consumers of utilities regulated by the PUC in order to fund a state agency of questionable value. If the office of the consumer advocate had any obvious value, that value would have been seen as a better of analysis of the Verizon sale to Fairpoint.

Opposing this bill might be a first step to eliminating at least one unnecessary agency. Republicans should oppose this bill as creating a new tax to fund an unnecessary state agency.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose OTP.

STATE FEDERAL RELATIONS AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

SB 412, relative to the display of the POW-MIA flag. **OTP. Vote 13-0.**

HRA Analysis: This bill establishes the appropriate protocol for display of our national, POW-MIA and state flags. It honors those lost in battle as prisoners or missing in action by ensuring the proper display of the symbol and reminder of their sacrifice. Republicans in their state party platform note the respect to be shown to veterans and this bill carries forward that mandate.

HRA Recommendation: Support OTP.

SENATE AMENDMENT

HB 1518, relative to increasing registration fees for certain OHRV and OHRV trails maintenance vehicles, and for transfer of registration of an OHRV or snowmobile.

HRA Analysis: This bill passed the House on the March 3, 2010 Consent Calendar and the Senate on April 7, 2010 by a voice vote. It increases antique and transfer registrations of ATVs and trail bikes, dedicating the funds to the department of fish and game. The Senate amendment would one-up the House by also increasing the registration fee for trail maintenance vehicles. Republicans understand that increased fees are no different than increased taxes and we stand in opposition to increasing yet another fee to add to the 80+ new and increased fees enacted in the past three years. We further understand that dedicated funds hide the true cost of government from the people and should be opposed.

HRA Recommendation: Oppose Both Concurrence with the Senate Amendment and a Request for Committee of Conference; Support Non-concurrence.

“It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people’s minds.”

Sam Adams