

Key House Votes on 2014 House Bills

Roll Call Vote #11 - OTP/A on HB544

A vote of Yea indicates support for Medicaid expansion, as part of Obamacare, that would eventually lead to tens of millions of dollars in costs to the state each year, and could result in the need for a sales or income tax to pay for it.

On the first session day of 2014, House Democrats offered a surprise amendment to HB544, a bill that originally dealt with health insurance exchanges. The amendment contained language to add on to the bill a full Medicaid expansion package, as part of Obamacare. Not only did most Republicans object to the policy, we objected to the improper method by which they brought it forward in the form of an amendment unrelated to the underlying bill. This was an attempt to ram this legislation through without proper process.

Roll Call Vote #16 - ITL on HB435

A vote of Yea indicates support for killing a bill to boost charter school funding to help give parents more choices in education and help their children succeed.

Choice and innovation in education allows for better education outcomes for our children. One of many charter school related bills we saw in 2014 was HB435, a bill that would give a modest increase in the amount charter schools receive in funding, to just 50% of what it costs to educate the average New Hampshire student. The majority of the Education committee recommended the bill be killed, but 2 votes on the House floor were unable to reach the same consensus. The bill was eventually referred for interim study after Democrats failed to muster the votes to kill the bill.

Roll Call Vote #16 - ITL on HB350

A vote of Yea indicates support for increasing mandates on New Hampshire job creators by making it illegal to discriminate against the unemployed.

Nothing scares away businesses or creates more opportunity for trial lawyers than laws like HB350. This bill creates a new protected class; unemployed people. It prohibits employers from making reasonable decisions as they see appropriate for their businesses and opens up the door for litigation. Our business community is fair and the majority of our business owners are compassionate. This bill would unfairly put them in a defensive position if they chose not to hire someone who happened to be unemployed.

Roll Call Vote #23 - OTP/A on HB562

A vote of Yea indicates support for excessive restrictions on the practice of title loans and could cost jobs and drive companies that provide this service out of the state.

On the 15th of January, the House voted on a bill that would severely curtail the ability of certain lenders to provide credit to New Hampshire citizens. Last term, the House passed a bill that repealed the prohibition on automobile title loans and overrode a veto by Governor Lynch. This allowed businesses to reopen, re-creating real jobs, and allowed some New Hampshire consumers to receive credit and/or rebuild their credit using loans using their vehicle titles. This term, under Democrat control, opponents of this business practice introduced HB562 to again clamp down on title loans.

Roll Call Vote #30 - OTP/A on HB474

A vote of Yea indicates support for expanding eligibility for in-state tuition for children of illegal immigrants.

This bill would allow children of illegal immigrants in New Hampshire to receive in-state tuition at the university system of New Hampshire.

Roll Call Vote #68 - Floor Amendment to HB1589

A vote of Nay indicates support for excessive restrictions on otherwise law abiding gun owners and instituted a universal background check system for firearms transfers.

HB1589 was originally a bill that would have placed excessive restrictions on otherwise law abiding gun owners and instituted a universal background check system for firearms transfers. The floor amendment sought to change the bill to a study committee to take a look at whether or not our State's low crime rate was a result of our current, less restrictive gun laws.

Roll Call Vote #84 - OTP on HB1403

A vote of Yea indicates support to raise the minimum wage, and tie future increases to the CPI, tying the hands of employers and costing jobs.

HB1403 is a bill that re-establishes a state minimum wage - right now we just follow the federal rate - as well as ties future increases of the minimum wage to the unpredictable consumer price index. We respectfully disagree that mandating a higher minimum wage would result in economic prosperity. Business owners should be able to set wages they believe is in the best interests of their business, and is sufficient to attract and retain qualified employees. This bill could have the effect of employers eliminating jobs and more specifically, eliminating opportunity for part time and entry level positions that many of our citizens and young people utilize to learn important job skills. Lastly, tying future increases to the CPI is unsafe. Even in a down economy, the CPI can rise. This sets a dangerous precedent and unfair mandate on employers.

Roll Call Vote #129 - OTP/A on HB1409

A vote of Yea indicates support forcing rental property owners to accept recipients of rental assistance and other tenants whose situations could endanger the well being of other tenants.

This law expands the law against discrimination to prohibit housing discrimination against recipients of rental assistance and victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. While we have the highest hopes for folks who do receive assistance, and we have the deepest of concern for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, we believe landlords should be able to make their best decisions based on individual cases, without government mandates that could leave the door open for litigation.

Roll Call Vote #140 - OTP/A on HB1411

A Yea vote indicates support to spend more and save less, grow government versus help our state's financial security.

This bill spends some the 2013 budget surplus by appropriating \$7m to the HHS department. This is bad for 2 reasons. First, the bill reopens the budget to give more money to one department. This is highly uncustomary and sets bad precedent. Second, the Republican position is to deposit ALL of the surplus funds in to the Rainy Day fund. Our rainy day fund is dreadfully low and according to Standard & Poor's, was one reason why they downgraded out bond rating. With just \$9.3 million in reserves, New Hampshire ranks lowest in New England.

Roll Call Vote #147- OTP/A on HB1101

A Yea vote indicates a vote to **kill** the effort to reform retirement system overpayments, protect taxpayers and protect the pension system for future retirees.

This bill would have examined the recovery of overpayments by the retirement system and establishing a committee to study the policies and procedures of the retirement system for benefits wrongfully paid. Recently, it was discovered that some NHRS beneficiaries were receiving excess payments. Somehow, the resolution was not only that these beneficiaries could keep these overpayments, but that the state had to pay them more. This is unacceptable. Our pension fund is dangerously underfunded as it is. We cannot continue to be in the position of not being able to recover overpayments and should be able to examine mechanisms by which we can protect taxpayers AND future pensioners.

Roll Call Vote #157 - OTP/A on HB1570

A Yea vote indicates support for a new fee on paint that will increase costs for homeowners and contractors.

This bill establishes a paint stewardship program, which imposes a new per-gallon fee on paint. Not only will this increase the cost of paint and home improvement, the bill should have gone to the House's tax review committee, Ways & Means, before the final vote. It did not, and was passed without further public hearing.

Roll Call Vote #159 - OTP/A on HB1635

A Yea vote indicates support to reopen the budget to spend a surplus we're not sure we'll have.

HB1635 not only opens up the budget once again, but this time we're spending money we don't have yet by proposing to use funds from the current budget surplus, which is only anticipated, not guaranteed. This is a disturbing trend that most New Hampshire citizens wouldn't consider for their own household budgets.

Roll Call Vote #180 - OTP/A on SB413

A vote of Yea indicates support for a version Medicaid expansion, as part of Obamacare.

This bill, although an improvement from what House Democrats attached to HB544 (above) uses Obamacare Medicaid dollars to provide private health insurance to low income citizens. The majority of House Republicans weren't convinced this bill is the right solution for New Hampshire. There are a number of Republican members who won't vote for any program tied to the failed Obamacare law. There are concerns about how the state will be able to pay for this type of entitlement expansion in perpetuity and if that could lead to significant budget problems down the road. This type and scale of program represents the largest increase in spending New Hampshire has seen for some time, and it is dependent on funding from the federal government which can't seem to keep many promises.