

**New Hampshire School Boards Association
Legislative Bulletin
April 27, 2007**



Current House Bills (HB) or Senate Bills (SB) you need to know:

HB 653 – NH State Retirement System

This bill, making several changes to the state retirement system and adding a local government member to the board of trustees, had a public hearing today. NHSBA supported changes made in the House, but also supports further changes, contained in an amendment offered to the committee, capping any annual retirement benefit at the final year base salary, increasing employee contribution rates, and providing an annual cost of living adjustment of 2%.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the Senate ED&A Committee (see <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/commdetails.asp?txtcommcode=S06>) and explain that while HB 653 is a good start, more needs to be accomplished. Specific reference should be made to recommendations contained in the “working group” proposal, including: an increase in employee rates, using the highest 5, instead of 3, years of pay for determining average final compensation, and capping the annual retirement benefit at 100% of base salary.

SB 88 – Public employee terms of employment, bargaining units, and continuation of pay plans

The bill has been assigned to a sub-committee of three House Labor Committee representatives: Jane Kelley, (D) Hampton, Marlene DeChane, (D) Barrington, and Maurice Villeneuve, (R) Bedford. The sub-committee will review the bill and make recommendations for consideration by the full Labor Committee.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the House Labor Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/commdetails.asp?txtcommcode=H11>) and urge defeat of this bill. It allows negotiating the number of personnel and tips the balance of negotiations by unilaterally implementing pay raises without local voter approval. Remind committee members of their position on HB 89 (passed in both the House and Senate) which creates a study committee on dispute resolution between local political subdivisions and public employees, specifically including the issue of evergreen clauses.

HB 89 – Study of the dispute resolution process

The Senate passed HB 89, which creates a committee to study dispute resolution between local political subdivisions and public employees, specifically including binding arbitration and evergreen clauses. The committee is to report its findings and recommendations on or before November 1, 2007. The bill now goes to the governor.

CACR 18 – State funding of public education

This proposed constitutional amendment is scheduled for a public hearing in House Finance on May 10 at 9:00. The proposal requires the legislature to define an adequate education, regularly determine the cost thereof and fund not less than fifty percent of the total statewide cost by distributing state aid to promote equal opportunity.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the House Finance Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/committeedetails.aspx?code=H34>) and urge defeat of this bill. While affirming the need to cherish our schools, CACR 18 would establish in our constitution an acceptable funding level of only half of what we define as adequacy. Funding only a partial amount of adequacy does not meet the spirit of the Claremont decisions, which have made clear the state’s commitment to all children and it’s “obligation to underwrite the cost of an adequate education for each educable child.” NHSBA resolutions numbers 4,5,6,7,&10 (www.nhsba.org/about_resolutions.asp) all address this issue, calling for full funding of all state education aid formulas and developing a distribution formula consistent with the spirit of the Claremont decisions.

SCR 2 – Urging Congress to amend the No Child Left Behind Act

The House Education Committee held a public hearing on this bill, supported by NHSBA, calling for revisions and more flexibility in NCLB, especially a GAO evaluation of the costs to the states and local districts for compliance with NCLB requirements.

ACTION ITEM

Please contact members of the House Education Committee (see <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/committeedetails.aspx?code=H05>) and urge support of this bill. It calls for NCLB revisions allowing for more flexibility in how states implement NCLB, growth models with multiple forms of assessment to measure student progress, allowing state determination of interventions when schools are designated in need of improvement, and requesting a Government Accountability Office evaluation of the costs to states and local school districts of complying with the No Child Left Behind Act requirements.

Please review the ACTION ITEMS above and contact your local representatives, senators, and committee members TODAY to voice your concerns regarding legislative proposals. Remember that you, through NHSBA, are the only locally elected officials that “speak” exclusively for public education in NH.

For the complete text of any bill, go to <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/ns/billstatus/quickbill.html> and enter the bill number, e.g. HB678, SB78 or CACR18 (no spaces!), and make sure the Session Year is 2007.

For more information on specific legislation, please call Dean Michener, NHSBA Director of Governmental Affairs at 603-228-2061, or email: deanm@nhsba.org.