

**New Hampshire School Boards Association  
Legislative Bulletin  
April 6, 2007**

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

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**HB 1 – the State Budget and Adequacy Grants**

The House budget as submitted included the 5% increase over current year funding level originally recommended by the Governor in February; a \$24 million increase. House Finance has recommended another \$31 million be added each year, bringing the total increase to \$51 million, the same amount needed for last November's estimates supplied by the Department of Education. While no specific bill yet addresses a formula change, the Governor has indicated his intent is two-fold: 1) those communities that were originally noticed of reductions in aid would be held harmless at current year funding, plus 5%, and 2) those communities given notice of increases in state aid would receive an amount closer to what was originally estimated. The full House will consider the state budget next week.

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**CACR 18 – Constitutional amendment on the state's role in providing an adequate education**

The Senate Judiciary Committee recommended passage of Governor Lynch's proposed constitutional amendment. CACR 18 affirms the need for the legislature to cherish our schools and define an adequate education, regularly determine the total statewide cost, and fund not less than 50% of that cost. Lawmakers would have the authority to distribute state aid in any manner deemed best to promote equal opportunity statewide for an adequate education, allowing only targeted aid based on wealth. A requirement that "some" aid be distributed to every school district could be met by another categorical aid (e.g. building aid) as well as state 'revenue' received from the statewide property tax. NHSBA spoke in opposition, noting several of our resolutions, (see #'s 5,6,7,10 at [http://www.nhsba.org/about\\_resolutions.asp](http://www.nhsba.org/about_resolutions.asp)) and NHSBA's support of the current state obligation to underwrite the cost of an adequate education for each educable child. The full senate will consider the bill next Thursday, April 12.

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**HB 882 – Limitations on tort liability**

The House adopted a change in the limitations on liability of governmental units, increasing the current limit of \$150,000 to \$275,000 for any one person, and from \$500,000 to \$925,000 total for a single incident or occurrence. Language was also added to increase or decrease these amounts annually based on the consumer price index. This amended version reflects a compromise on the original position that sought to remove these limitations entirely. The bill now moves to the Senate for further consideration.

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**HB 514 – Minimum wage**

The House adopted new minimum wages for hourly employees. Beginning Sept. 1, 2007 the minimum rate would be \$6.50, increasing to \$7.25 in September 2008. The bill now moves to the Senate Labor Committee for further consideration.

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**HB 479 – Default budgets in official ballot districts**

The House soundly rejected a proposal seeking to add further restrictions, definitions and loss of governing body decision-making when determining default budgets. The bill was killed on a 206-117 vote.

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**HB 340 – Restricting where sex offenders may reside**

The House rejected this bill seeking to restrict sex offenders from residing within a certain distance from schools.

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**HB 559 – Seat belts on school buses**

The House rejected this proposal to require seat belts on school buses, noting that research shows a high probability of injury from lap belts, and implementing shoulder harness belts requires proper size fitting and also reduces bus capacity.

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**HB 167 – Required areas of assessment**

The Senate approved this bill, adding civics and economics to the list of required areas to be assessed annually in grades 3 through 8 and one grade in high school. Having passed both the House and Senate, the bill awaits signature of the governor to become law.

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](mailto:deanm@nhsba.org).