

STATE HOUSE MEMO - OCTOBER 6, 2012

## Consider what bills actually passed

### **GOP legislation skews extreme**

By Rep. David B. Campbell / For the Monitor

The New Hampshire House Republican super-majority passed the following legislation in 2011-12. It is ideologically extreme and not in keeping with the values held by the majority of New Hampshire's citizens. Consider:

#### **Education**

- Lowered the high-school dropout age from 18 to 16.
- Reduced state funding of the university system by 44 percent and the community colleges by 16 percent.
- Suspended the state's scholarship fund, resulting in higher student costs, which means fewer students being able to afford college and less courses for others.
- Established a study committee to allow the diversion of public money to fund students attending private and religious schools.

#### **Women's health**

- Ended funding of Planned Parenthood, thereby eliminating access to preventive health care, such as birth control, disease and cancer screening for thousands of women.
- Denied fair access to birth control and comprehensive health protections, based on the employer's religious beliefs, thereby enabling discrimination against women in their health insurance coverage.
- Forced medical providers to distribute intimidating and inaccurate information to women, and to delay their constitutionally guaranteed right of choice.

#### **Worker's rights**

- Undermined the ability of workers to unionize by passing right-to-work legislation (which allows employees who work in a unionized workplace to not pay their share of the costs that unions incur in negotiating and enforcing collective bargaining agreements). This, despite the fact that New Hampshire consistently has a lower unemployment rate than 20 of the 22 right-to-work states; past Republican legislatures rejecting right-to-work for decades; and only 11 percent of New Hampshire workers being union members.
- Eliminated collective bargaining for state employees, making them "at will" employees without any rights.

- Repealed New Hampshire's state minimum wage law.
- Weakened the rights of workers and undermined their right to unionize.
- Took away union workers' lunch break.

### **Human services**

- Eliminated, suspended or drastically reduced state programs affecting children with emotional and mental health issues; the Healthy Kids insurance program; assistance for domestic violence victims; women's health care and family planning services; services for mentally ill and developmentally disabled individuals; Head Start and child care; nursing homes and Alzheimer's care; vocational and job training for the unemployed.

These program cuts have directly and indirectly affected thousands of New Hampshire residents and downshifted the associated financial and social costs back onto local communities, nursing homes, property taxpayers and social service and charitable agencies.

### **Public safety**

- Allowed guns in the State House.
- Allowed guns on state university and community college campuses and in public parks, beaches and athletic stadiums.
- Allowed anyone 18 and older to carry and conceal a firearm without a permit or criminal background check.
- Allowed anyone 18 and older to be able to stand his or her ground and use deadly force anywhere and anytime they felt threatened.

Note: All of these House bills were opposed by law enforcement.

### **Resolutions to Congress**

- Supporting withdrawal from the United Nations.
- Affirming states' power and separation from the United States government. If this was passed 150 years ago, New Hampshire would have been a Confederate State.

This list of extreme Republican-backed legislation is by no means complete, and fortunately, not all of these bills and resolutions were enacted. The summary is meant to provide voters with information on some of the most controversial and publicized legislation that actually passed the New Hampshire House in the past biennium, without Democratic support.

The Nov. 6th election will allow New Hampshire voters a chance to decide if this is the kind of legislation they endorse and the kind of future they want for New Hampshire.

***(Rep. David B. Campbell is a Democrat from Nashua and a candidate for speaker of the House.)***