

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Bulletin #1

2015 Session

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Welcome to the 2015 Legislative Bulletin!

The NHMA *Legislative Bulletin* is a weekly publication designed primarily to communicate with municipal officials, but it also serves to keep legislators, the Governor's office, and the media informed about municipal legislative priorities. The *Bulletin* will be published next on Friday, January 9, and each Friday after that until the legislative session ends in June. The *Bulletin* generally contains:

- A brief analysis of key legislative developments during the past week;
- An update on any action on NHMA policy bills;
- The legislative calendar, listing municipal bills to be heard in the next two to three weeks;
- A call for action on critical legislation when municipal input is necessary; and
- Periodic updates of federal issues of interest to municipal officials.

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Early editions of the *Legislative Bulletin* will also contain a brief description of bills introduced for the session that we have identified as being of municipal interest, along with the name of the prime sponsor and the committee to which the bill has been referred.

To serve our members more efficiently, we post the *Legislative Bulletin* on our website (www.nhmunicipal.org) each Friday and send an e-mail notice when it is posted, to provide it electronically to as many as we can. If you are receiving the *Bulletin* by U.S. mail and would prefer to receive it electronically instead, please let us know so that we may update our e-mail address list accordingly. The *Bulletin* will get to you much sooner electronically—and time is often of the essence with the legislative process!

This publication is designed to inform and update. If you have ideas about providing information in a different format or a more understandable fashion, please let us know. You can reach us at governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org or the phone number on the *Legislative Bulletin* letterhead.

Invite Your Legislators to Your Next Meeting!

If you want to have a positive effect on municipal legislation in 2015, one of the best things you can do **right now** is to invite your legislative delegation to your next board of selectmen/council/aldermen meeting. This applies whether your legislators are veterans, rookies, or a combination of the two.

Over the next several months, there will be occasions when we will ask you to contact your legislators (or you will want to contact them, even without being asked) to discuss pending legislation. Making a cold call to someone you've never met is no fun for even the hardest extrovert, and for many people it is downright intimidating.

That is why it makes sense to invite your legislators to a meeting **now**, before you need to call them to ask for support on a particular issue. If you have a get-acquainted session with your legislators, in which you talk generally about legislative priorities and concerns without asking anything specific of them, you will feel much more comfortable, and will almost certainly get a better reception, when you call them in a few weeks or months to ask them to support or oppose a particular bill.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Invite all of your representatives and your senator. (If you don't know who they are, go to [this page](#) and click on your county, then your city or town—or call us.)
- Set aside time at the meeting for all of the legislators and all members of your governing body to introduce themselves.
- Make it a two-way exchange. Share your concerns with them, but also ask them about their priorities and what they expect from this year's legislature.
- Remember that municipal issues are mostly non-partisan. You do not have to share your legislators' views on guns, abortion, relations with Cuba, or capital punishment in order to find common ground on issues that affect your city or town.
- Exchange contact information, and ask them what is the best way to contact them: phone, e-mail, or something else.
- Remember that they work for you, and with rare exceptions, they **do** want to hear from their local government leaders.

House and Senate to Meet January 7; Committees to Follow

The House and Senate will meet (separately) in session on Wednesday, January 7. Although no schedule has been published yet for the day's activities, they are expected to adopt rules, introduce bills, and attend to other administrative details. The House and Senate will meet in joint session at noon on Thursday, January 8, for the inauguration of the Governor.

Legislative committees will begin meeting the week of January 12; meetings that week will likely be limited to committee orientations. We expect that hearings on bills will begin the week of January 19.

New Bills, New Committees

As of this writing, more than 800 legislative service requests (LSRs) are being drafted into bills, which will become available on the legislature's website, www.gencourt.state.nh.us, as they are completed and are formally introduced. There may be a few more on the way. None of them have been released in bill form yet, but that will happen very soon. As they are released, we will publish lists of the bills of municipal interest in the *Bulletin*.

Committee assignments have been made in both the House and the Senate, and you can find the complete listing on the legislative website. Below are the committees that are of particular interest to municipal officials. If you know, or have a special relationship with, any of the members of these committees, please let us know. Making connections is an important way to make sure municipal interests are understood and taken into account. Please contact the Government Affairs staff at governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org.

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2015 Town & School Moderators Workshops

SB 2 Meeting

Saturday, January 17

(Snow date: Saturday, January 24)

Traditional Meeting

Saturday, February 21

(Snow date: Saturday, February 28)

9 a.m.—12:30 p.m. 25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord, NH

Cost: \$40

Registration and continental breakfast begin at 8:30 a.m.

Attendees will receive a copy of NHMA's 2014 edition Town Meeting and School Meeting Handbook and a copy of the 2015 supplement.

Topics include:

The Basic Law of Town, Village District and School District Meeting

Statutes governing the moderator's duties at town, village district and school district meetings will be discussed along with issues related to warrant articles, the operating budget, secret ballot voting and other town meeting issues. These topics will be addressed in two concurrent sessions tailored for new and experienced moderators. Ample time will be devoted to questions and answers.

Strategies for Running a Smooth Meeting

Moderators are faced with a challenging task: keeping meetings focused and fair to all participants, while effectively facilitating the flow of debate. This session will highlight suggested strategies for running respectful and efficient meetings.

Sample Scenarios

A series of sample scenarios will help attendees prepare for a wide range of meeting challenges.



Register online at www.nhmunicipal.org under CALENDAR OF EVENTS. Online pre-registration required one week prior to each date. *Space is limited.*

Questions? Call 800.852.3358, ext. 3350 or email NHMAregistrations@nhmunicipal.org