

**New Hampshire Municipal Association**

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

**Legislative Bulletin 17**

**2026 Session**

**April 24, 2026**



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## **Ask Senators to Support HB 1010, Fix Others**

Member should contact members of the [Senate Commerce Committee](#) to **support HB 1010** before the bill is reported out of committee.

**HB 1010**, relative to multi-family residential development on commercially zoned land, is **supported** by NHMA. The bill makes **significant positive updates to the 2025 universal zoning mandate** requiring municipalities to permit multi-family residential uses on all land zoned to permit commercial uses. The bill:

- Allows planning boards to require applicants to demonstrate that existing infrastructure is adequate to support the proposed residential development on commercially zoned land.
- Allows municipalities to require the applicants to provide infrastructure if the existing infrastructure is not adequate.
- Requires the applicant to receive permission from the operator of a public water or sewer system to connect.
- Clarifies that nonconforming structures may be converted to multi-family dwelling units or mixed use provided that the structure is not altered to further violate zoning district dimensional requirements.
- Ensures that multi-family dwelling units on commercially zoned land are still subject to subdivision or site plan review regulations.

**Tell [committee members](#) that HB 1010 makes reasonable, commonsense updates that will clarify the statute and head off potential litigation.**

Members may also want to comment on a pair of other bills with this committee dealing with accessory dwelling units (ADUs):

- [HB 1079](#), allowing accessory dwelling units to be built within or attached to certain non-conforming structures. Although the bill was requested by NHMA to clarify a specific section of the state's ADU law, the House amended the bill to apply the vesting procedures for approved subdivisions to approved building permits for ADUs. NHMA **opposes the bill in its current form**, but believes it can still be amended to reflect its original intent.
- [HB 1540](#), relative to municipal health ordinances and accessory dwelling units. NHMA **supports** this bill, but believes it can be improved.

Ask members of the **Senate Commerce Committee** to **work with NHMA and other stakeholders to fix these bills.**

## **Senate Hearings on Municipal Bills**

The [Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee](#) will hold public hearings on four bills **opposed** by NHMA beginning at **9:15 a.m. on Tuesday, April 28, in State House (SH) Room 122-123.**

- [HB 1234](#) (9:15 a.m.), identifying certain school district offices as incompatible for purposes of school district elections.
- [HB 1300](#) (9:30 a.m.), establishing a biennial school district local tax cap question and related limitations on central office administrative expenses in school districts.

NHMA opposes this bill because it does not contain a state appropriation for the cost of these additional ballots, meaning the city or town will be required to pay for the ballots at every general election.

- [HB 1319](#) (9:45 a.m.), enabling towns, village districts, or school districts to adopt or rescind a local fiscal accountability committee for towns and schools.
- [HB 1355](#) (10:15 a.m.), relative to eliminating the default budget from the official ballot referenda and preventing the purpose of a petitioned warrant article from being amended.

For detailed instructions on ways to share your position on these and any other bills, see “*How to Make Your Voice Heard*” below.

## House, Senate Roundup

Both the House and Senate met on Thursday and several bills NHMA is watching were acted on:

### House

- [SB 441](#) was **referred to interim study**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, dealt with memorandums of understandings between municipalities to transport an individual that is homeless or showing signs of addiction from one municipality to another. It also attempted to give municipalities authority they do not have relative to programs funded by the opioid abatement trust fund.
- [SB 538](#) was **passed as amended**. The bill, **supported without the amendment** by NHMA, extends the eligibility terms for municipal energy projects to receive net metering compensation under alternative tariffs approved by the Public Utilities Commission. The bill advances to the House Finance Committee.
- [SB 541](#) was **passed**. This bill, **supported** by NHMA, reallocates \$5 million from an existing state fund toward the Southern NH Regional Water Interconnection Project-2B. This project addresses MtBE and PFAS contamination, water quality, and water supply needs in Windham, Salem, Hampstead, Atkinson, and Plaistow. The bill advances to the House Finance Committee.
- [SB 564](#) was **passed with a minor amendment**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, prohibits municipal limits on dead-end road length if the road is compliant with the state fire code and requires municipalities to allow developers to treat perimeter buffers as developable land. The bill also prohibits limiting the number of lots allowed on dead end roads. The bill will go back to the Senate, which can concur with the amendment, non-concur, or request a committee of conference. Contact **your [local senator](#) and ask him or her to vote for non-**

**concurrence because SB 564 promotes unsafe, inefficient development patterns and imposes a one-size-fits-all mandate** that ignores local conditions and established planning practices.

- **SB 593** was **passed with a floor amendment**. This bill, **supported** by NHMA, fixes a loophole in the solid waste surcharge enacted last year that inadvertently left solid waste districts out of the state's rebate process for municipalities. A floor amendment changed the effective date to “upon passage.” The bill will go back to the Senate, which can concur with the amendment, non-concur, or request a committee of conference.

## Senate

- **HB 1196** was **killed**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, would have repealed the state's Housing Champions program.
- **HB 1526** was **referred to interim study**. The bill, **opposed** by NMHA, would have overhauled the process for adopting a budget committee in RSA 32:14 and other statutes.
- **HB 1575** was **passed**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, transfers the determination of the default budget to the budget committees. Under current law, the governing body prepares the default budget unless the legislative body votes to delegate the preparation of the default budget to the budget committee. The bill will go to the governor.
- **HB 1600** was **passed**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, requires the secretary of state to ensure that all polling places have access to the statewide centralized voter registration database during election days. The bill will go to the governor.
- **HB 1602** was **referred to interim study**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA and other organizations across the political spectrum, would have created a manufacturer-funded, third-party battery-recycling program for specific types of batteries.
- **HB 1759** was **killed**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, would have made a land use board's vote on whether a member should be disqualified binding rather than advisory, requiring recusal if a majority finds disqualification is warranted.

## Quick Hits

Brief updates on bills and other matters referenced in previous *Legislative Bulletins*:

**Amendments in the offing?** Amendments are being discussed on a pair of priority bills opposed by NHMA: **HB 1184**, dealing with the issuance of no trespass orders (NTOs) on municipal or school district property, and **HB 1064**, which eliminates municipal immunity regarding negligence that results in personal injury or property

damage. No amendments have been formally introduced yet. From a municipal perspective, it would be better if both of these bills were killed; however, barring that outcome, we hope any potential amendments can shave off the sharpest edges of these proposals.

**Good news on bad bills:** A Senate committee this week recommended a pair of bills featured in previous Legislative Bulletins as inexpedient to legislate: [HB 1224](#), putting draconian requirements on the default budget calculation for towns under the official ballot law (“SB 2 towns”), and [HB 1213](#), relative to highway agents. These recommendations will be voted on next month.

**Data-driven research:** NHMA Executive Director Margaret Byrnes was a panelist this week on a webinar hosted by the New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute on its latest report, “Property Taxes in New Hampshire: How They Work and How They Compare.” Topics included how property taxes are structured, how they vary across communities, and how New Hampshire’s reliance on local property taxes compares to other states. Check out the recording [here](#).

**NHMA recorded webinar:** As the New Hampshire legislature heads into the home stretch, hundreds of bills with municipal impact are still in play. Do you know which ones will affect your community’s operations or bottom line? Check out NHMA’s recently recorded [Legislative Half-Time Webinar](#) for the scoop on the most impactful bills.

New email address: There is a new email address to contact NHMA’s legislative advocacy team: [advocacy@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:advocacy@nhmunicipal.org). The address was created to better reflect the work of the team. Messages sent to the government affairs email will be forwarded to the new mailbox for the foreseeable future, but please update your contacts now.

## Governor Signs Municipal Bills

The governor recently signed three bills NHMA is following into law:

- [HB 323](#) (Chapter 20), requiring the presentation of a government-issued photographic means of identification in order to vote. Effective June 2, 2026.
- [HB 1204](#) (Chapter 32), relative to the grading and use of timber grown in New Hampshire.
- [HB 1246](#) (Chapter 33), relative to planning board members serving on other local boards. Effective June 21, 2026.

## 2026 Legislative Calendar

### House Schedule

- **Thursday, May 7, 2026**—Last day to report all Senate Bills.
- **Thursday, May 14, 2026**—Last day to act on all Senate Bills.
- **Thursday, May 21, 2026**—Last day to form committee of conference.
- **Thursday, May 28, 2026**—Last day to sign committee of conference reports (4:00 p.m.).
- **Thursday, June 4, 2026**—Last day to act on committee of conference reports.

## Senate Schedule

- **Thursday, April 30, 2026**—Deadline for Policy Committees to ACT on all House bills with a fiscal impact, except bills exempted pursuant to Senate Rule 4-5.
- **Thursday, May 14, 2026**—Deadline to ACT on all House bills.
- **Thursday, May 21, 2026**—Deadline to FORM Committees of Conference.
- **Thursday, May 28, 2026**—Deadline to SIGN Committee of Conference Reports. (4:00 p.m.)
- **Thursday, June 4, 2026**—Deadline to ACT on Committee of Conference Reports.

## How to Make your Voice Heard

If a bill is of importance to your municipality, it's always best to make your case – for or against – in person. Every Friday, NHMA posts a [Bill Hearings Schedule](#) for the upcoming week. However, if you can't make it to Concord, you can use the Legislature's online portal to put your position on the hearing record.

The House has an [online testimony submission system](#) that allows you to indicate your position on the bill with an option to attach testimony. If you want to email all the members of a House committee, you will have to copy their email addresses individually from the [committee page](#).

The Senate has [a remote sign-in sheet](#) where you can indicate whether you are supportive of a bill, opposed, or neutral. Written testimony can be submitted via the "Email Entire Committee" link found on the [Senate committee page](#).

If you have time to follow along, livestreams of [House](#) and [Senate](#) sessions and committee meetings are available on YouTube. Prior sessions and committee meetings are also archived.

Finally, if you just want to contact your local legislators, there are [Contact a Senator](#) and [Contact a Representative](#) links on the [General Court](#) website.

**Note:** For any readers who print these emails out, all of the above links can be found on the General Court website at: <https://gc.nh.gov/>

## **Follow Bills That Matter to You Online**

In addition to our weekly Legislative Bulletin, NHMA provides members access to FastDemocracy, an online bill tracking platform, for efficient, real-time updates to legislative activity of interest to members. Visit our online [Bill Tracker](#) page to learn more and feel free to subscribe to weekly or daily updates on subjects and bills of interest.

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### **NHMA Events Calendar** **2025 Final Legislative Bulletin**

#### **Editorial Staff:**

**Margaret M.L. Byrnes, Executive Director**

**Marty Karlon, Editor in Chief, Policy & Research Analyst**

**Sarah Burke Cohen, Legislative Advocate**

**Brodie Deshaies, Legislative Advocate**

#### **Layout & Communications:**

**Miranda Blaikie, Communications Coordinator**

**New Hampshire Municipal Association**

**25 Triangle Park Drive**

**Concord, NH 03301**

**Tel: 603.224.7447**

**Email: [advocacy@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:advocacy@nhmunicipal.org)**

**Website: [www.nhmunicipal.org](http://www.nhmunicipal.org)**