

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 25

2025 Session

June 27, 2025



[Live Bill Tracker](#)

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## This is the Way the Session Ends...

The House and Senate both met on Thursday and finished their work for the 2025 legislative session, including passage of a \$15.9 billion, two-year state budget that the governor has indicated she will sign. Both chambers also approved multiple committee of conference reports. These bills, and others adopted over the past several weeks, are heading to the governor, who can sign a bill, veto it, or let it pass without signing it.

NHMA will publish our *Final Legislative Bulletin*, summarizing all new laws of municipal interest before the end of the summer; the timing will depend on how quickly the bills get signed. Our legal affairs team will develop guidance documents for legislation that requires it. In addition to producing the *Final Bulletin*, we will be scheduling a “*Legislative Wrap Up*” webinar later this summer.

Thank you to all the local officials who took time to speak with their legislators during this session. **Your voices truly mattered!**

## Budget Passes, Barely

After a tense standoff between the governor’s office and legislative leadership this week, the House and Senate agreed Thursday to a last-minute compromise on the two budget bills, [HB 1](#) and [HB 2](#). While other issues were also in the mix this week, the primary sticking point was changes to New Hampshire Retirement System benefits for about 1,500 first responders hired before July 1, 2011, and not vested prior to January 1, 2012—

Group II-Tier B. The final version of the compromise restores most, but not all, of the benefits that were changed through legislation in 2011. The agreement adjusts Tier B benefits to what is currently in effect for Group II retirement system members vested prior to July 1, 2011 (Tier A), with the following exceptions:

- Group II-Tier B benefits will continue to be calculated based on the highest five salary years, and the formula regulating the amount of compensation over base pay remains in effect.
- Payouts of unused sick leave are not included in the pension calculation.
- Annual benefits for Group II-Tier B members are capped at no more than \$145,000.

In terms of paying for the retirement changes, the budget includes the promise of at least \$262 million in state funding through 2034, although only \$42 million to be paid in FY 26-27 is guaranteed. The final budget also retained the Senate language stating that the state “shall pay the normal contribution and accrued liability contributions attributable to this act,” which is intended to prevent downshifting the cost of these changes to municipalities. NHMA’s only concern with any retirement proposal is whether the state would pay the full cost of the changes and ensure no cost downshifting to municipalities occurs.

For a high-level summary of all items in the budget impacting municipalities, see [last week’s Bulletin](#). All items referenced last week, except the retirement changes, were included in the final budget as-is.

Despite a challenging state revenue picture, costly legislative priorities (pension changes, school voucher expansion), municipalities maintained most of the hard-won gains in state aid achieved in recent years.

## Committee of Conference Results

In addition to the budget, the House and Senate acted on multiple committee of conference reports on Thursday. Thirteen bills NHMA is following were adopted. These bills will be enrolled and sent to the governor. Priority bills are denoted with an asterisk (\*). **NHMA will send out a separate alert next week asking members to contact the governor’s office and request she veto specific priority bills heading to her desk.** Twenty-two municipalities have already [sent a letter](#) to the governor requesting she veto [HB 457](#), mandating group or congregate living in every zoning district that allows residential housing. (Spoiler alert: This bill will be in our alert next week!)

\* **HB 67**, relative to agreements with the secretary of state for the use of accessible voting systems. A related bill that also was adopted, **HB 613**, enables towns and cities opt out of deploying accessible voting machines under certain circumstances.

**HB 71**, creating a new public notice requirement that municipalities with a population of 10,000 or more must follow before issuing tax bills after the re-assessment, and prohibiting school facilities to be used to provide shelter for certain illegal immigrants.

**HB 132**, modifies the language regarding the liability of certain relatives to provide support to indigent family members in need of public assistance. The bill eliminates court action should a family member refuse to provide aid. It also amends the language relative to determining if a family member has the financial means to assist.

**HB 154**, enabling voters to request to have their ballots hand counted.

**HB 250**, enabling local governing bodies to regulate the muzzling of dogs.

**HB 273**, giving parents or legal guardians access to their minor child's library records.

**HB 428**, relative to the state building code; no local amendment shall be enforced if it was not submitted to the building code review board by July 1, 2025.

**HB 464**, prohibiting certain candidates for political office from participating in counting ballots, enabling the use of certain personal information for determining voter eligibility, and relative to the reporting of low value campaign donations.

**HB 737**, changing the local option for Keno to an opt-out, rather than the current opt-in that has existed since 2017, June 1, 2027.

\* **SB 213**, creating a misdemeanor-level offense for public employees who "electioneer," as newly defined in the bill, and adds an unrelated requirement that any registered voter requesting an absentee ballot must provide proof of identity, citizenship, age, and domicile.

**SB 221**, mandating annual verification of the voter checklist and directs the secretary of state's office to develop any forms necessary for the reregistration of eligible voters removed from the checklist.

**SB 291**, exempting church parsonages that are rented or vacant from property taxation.

## **New Laws Impacting Municipalities**

The governor signed nine bills of municipal interest into law over the past two weeks. NHMA's position on the bill, if any, is indicated:

**HB 92**, requiring recusal of members of zoning boards of adjustment and planning boards in certain circumstances. (*Effective 8/22/25*)

**HB 134** (support), relative to the state building code. *(Effective 7/1/25)*

**HB 265**, requiring that a public body’s meeting minutes include start and end times of the meeting and the printed name of the recording secretary. *(Effective 8/22/25)*

**HB 373**, relative to the management and regulation of town real property. *(Effective 8/23/25)*

**HB 569** (support), relative to the establishment of county-wide communication districts. *(Effective 8/1/25)*

**SB 42** (support), relative to notice of death affidavits. *(Effective 6/22/25)*

**SB 105** (oppose), enabling towns to adopt budget caps. *(Effective 8/23/25)*

**SB 173** (oppose), relative to residential property subject to housing covenants under the low-income housing tax credit program. *(Effective 7/1/25)*

**SB 212**, changing references from “votes” to “ballots” in the laws regarding elections. *(Effective 6/17/25)*

## **Final Word**

From everyone here at NHMA, thank you again for your input, questions, and support throughout the legislative session. Have a great summer!

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### **NHMA Events Calendar** **2024 Final Legislative Bulletin**

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