

New Hampshire Municipal Association

THE SERVICE AND ACTION ARM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPALITIES

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 15

2026 Session

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[Live Bill Tracker](#)
[Bill Hearings Schedule](#)

Editor's Note: 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.

In this issue:

- House Hearing on Risk Pool Bill
- New Lease on Life? Ask Senate to Just Say No
- Senate, House Roundup
- Senate Meets Next Week
- Upcoming Hearings on Multiple Municipal Bills
- Quick Hits
- Last Call for Legislative Policy Proposals
- 2026 Legislative Calendar
- How to Make Your Voice Heard
- Follow Bills That Matter to You Online
- New Email Address!

House Hearing on Risk Pool Bill

On **Tuesday, April 14, at 1:15 p.m. in Government Place (GP) Room 229**, the [House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee](#) will hold public hearing on **SB 661**, the Senate's take on updating the regulation of public risk pools. **SB 661**, **opposed** by NHMA, introduces assessable risk pools into the NH statutory scheme, which subjects members to potential unbudgeted, mid-year assessments. Under **SB 661**, assessable pools would be the only model allowed. NHMA opposes the bill because it does not properly address all types of risk pools and therefore does not properly address the needs of our members and adds uncertainty to municipal budgeting.

Risk pools are created by cities, towns, counties, and school districts to reduce risks and associated insurance costs, shifting risk from an individual political subdivision to the pool. Across the country, two primary types of risk pools exist: assessable and non-assessable. The Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRIP) recognizes both models. It is important to keep in mind that the stability of healthcare risk pools is tied to the future stability of healthcare for thousands of public employees in our state. In 2025, one of the three then-existing healthcare pools in the state issued a surprise \$30 million assessment on members and another pool went out of business, also leaving its members on the hook for an assessment.

The House risk pool bill, [HB 1491](#), had a public hearing in the [Senate Finance Committee](#) this week, held concurrently with a hearing on a proposed Senate [amendment \(am-1316s\)](#) that attempts to bridge the gap between the House and Senate positions. NHMA has **concerns with the Senate amendment**, which creates nearly insurmountable hurdles for a non-assessable pool to exist. More negotiation to hammer out a compromise—if possible—is expected in the coming weeks.

If your community has been impacted by assessments or is concerned about the viability of risk pools, please [reach out to your local Senator](#) to share your concerns.

NHMA supports the ability of members to establish and govern the pools and understands that clear regulations that protect the members and allow the pools to operate are necessary. With health insurance being a huge driver of municipal costs, regularly outpacing inflation, providing legislative clarity is crucial.

New Lease on Life? Just Say No

[HB 1066](#), a bill **opposed** by NHMA and unanimously recommended for interim study by a Senate committee, was pulled from the Senate consent calendar this week and moved back to next **Thursday, April 16**, when a floor amendment is expected to be introduced.

HB 1066 would greatly limit municipalities' ability to enter into lease agreements, including those with non-appropriation clauses, which are not debt. The bill would

require leases for building or facility improvements that become “fixtures” to be placed on a special warrant article, like a bond, and approved by a three-fifths vote of the legislative body. It also requires all leases of \$500,000 to be placed on a special warrant article, like a bond, subject to its own public hearing, and approved by a three-fifths vote of the legislative body.

Rather than ramming through a floor amendment that **municipalities will never have an opportunity to testify on**, please contact [your local Senator](#) and ask him or her to **support the interim study recommendation** so the conversation can continue this fall with input for **all** affected parties.

Senate, House Roundup

The Senate and House held sessions Thursday and acted on several bills NHMA is following:

Senate

[HB 1113](#) was **passed**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, enables towns to establish a 3-year term for town moderators. The bill will go to the governor.

[HB 1118](#) was **passed**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, increases the threshold for funds that must be remitted to municipal treasurers at least weekly or daily from \$500 to \$3,500. The change applies to remittances from various town departments, including the tax collector and town clerk. The bill will go to the governor.

[HB 1134](#) was sent to **interim study**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, would mandate how appropriations for warrant articles shall accumulate in the order in which articles are approved at an annual meeting or in the order in which articles appear on an official ballot for purposes of determining when a warrant article will trigger an override vote of a local tax or budget cap.

[HB 1137](#) was **killed**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, would make the representative of the governing body on the municipal budget committee an ex-officio, non-voting member.

[HB 1468](#) was **passed with amendment**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, enables municipalities to incorporate flood resilience planning into their master plans and broadens the eligibility criteria for state housing planning grants aimed at supporting flood hazard mitigation and related land use updates. The bill will go back to the House, which can concur with the amendment, non-concur, or request a committee of conference.

HB 1541 was **passed with amendment**. The bill, **supported** by NHMA, requires the secretary of state to provide all voting precincts with secure containers for storing ballots. The bill will go back to the House, which can concur, non-concur, or request a committee of conference.

House

SB 527 was **passed**. The bill allows written notices from state agencies to municipalities to be sent via electronic mail unless the town or city clerk notifies the state agency that it objects to emailed written notices. NHMA is neutral on this bill, which will go to the governor.

SB 592 was **passed with amendment**. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, prohibits municipalities from using the “inventory of habitat strongholds and wildlife corridors... as the basis for municipal zoning or planning purposes,” which would prevent municipalities from protecting valuable wildlife corridors and habitat through zoning. The bill will go back to the Senate, which can concur, non-concur, or request a committee of conference.

Senate Hearings on Municipal Bills

The **Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee** will hold public hearings on multiple bills beginning at 9:15 a.m. on **Tuesday, April 14, in State House (SH) Room 122-123**.

HB 1604 (9:15 a.m.), **supported** by NHMA, requires suitable public facilities such as schools and town halls to be made available as polling places upon request by local election officials.

HB 1021 (9:45 a.m.), **supported** by NHMA, amends the date to provide written notice to a municipality of a taxpayer’s election to be assessed under the low-income housing tax credit program.

HB 1526 (10:00 a.m.), a bill **opposed** by NHMA, overhauls the process for adopting a budget committee in RSA 32:14 and other statutes.

HB 1575 (10:15 a.m.), **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 adopts the provisions of RSA 40:14-b, which allows the legislative body to delegate the preparation of the default budget to the municipal budget committee.

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

Senate Meets Next Week

The Senate will meet on **Thursday, April 16**, and will act on several bills NHMA is watching:

HB 686, on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, prohibits certain public entities from conducting or sponsoring political surveys, polls, or questionnaires in their official capacities.

HB 1309, on the consent calendar as ought to pass (OTP). The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, requires municipalities to not only state the subject matter of all warrant articles to be acted upon, but also “the intent and effect ... stated clearly and without commentary or ambiguity.” Currently, the selectmen are required to “distinctly state” each question on the warrant. While the intent of the bill was to prohibit commentary or ambiguity, the bill inadvertently requires commentary on the “intent and effect” or each warrant article.

HB 1516, on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, allows municipalities to vote to require that pie charts, bar charts, and QR codes be placed on property tax bills depicting where and how tax dollars are being allocated.

HB 1581, on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, allows municipalities to adopt a requirement that property owners be given notice when the assessed value of their property changes by certain amounts.

HB 1788 on the consent calendar as refer to interim study. The bill, **opposed** by NHMA, prohibits the state and political subdivisions from entering into or renewing any contract that includes diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)-related provisions, including requirements for contractors to implement DEI programs, conduct DEI training, or comply with DEI-related reporting obligations and require contracts to be void if they contain such language. It also allows any citizen to file a lawsuit against a municipality for having a contract that contains—or that someone thinks contains—DEI language.

HB 1066, *see above*.

Quick Hits

Brief updates on other bills NHMA is following:

Dead-end roads: [SB 564](#), prohibiting municipal limits on dead-end road length if the road is compliant with the state fire code and requiring municipalities allow developers to treat perimeter buffers as developable land, sailed through the **House Housing Committee** this week, 17-0. The bill would allow the placement of utilities within designated open space or perimeter buffer areas of subdivisions. The bill also prohibits limiting the number of lots allowed on dead end roads. NHMA **opposes SB 564** because it would **undermine safe and effective local planning, creating safety risks, hindering emergency access, encouraging poorly connected, high-density development, and defeating the purpose of perimeter buffers, which serve to protect natural resources, separate incompatible uses, or block out light and noise for neighboring properties**. The House is expected to act on the bill on **Thursday, April 23**. Please **contact your [local House members](#) to oppose this bill**, which, according to testimony, was introduced on behalf of a single landowner.

Battery recycling: On **Wednesday, April 15, at 10:00 a.m. in SH Room 122-123**, the **[Senate Ways and Means Committee](#)** will hold a public hearing on **[HB 1602](#)**, a bill **supported** by NHMA creating a safe battery recycling stewardship program funded by manufacturers. Please sign in to support this bill, which is facing headwinds from out-of-state special interest groups.

Legislative Policy Proposals: Last Call!

NHMA has a member-driven process by which it establishes the legislative policy positions to guide staff advocacy activities over the coming legislative biennium.

If there is a law affecting municipal government that you think needs to be fixed, or if you have an idea for how the functions of local government might be improved with legislation, this is your opportunity to propose a change—**but you must act soon!** To share your proposal, complete this **[Legislative Policy Proposal](#)** Form. Include a brief (one or two sentence) policy statement, a statement about the municipal interest served by the proposal and an explanation that describes the nature of the problem or concern from a municipal perspective and discusses the proposed action that is being advocated to address the problem. Mail to NHMA, 25 Triangle Park Drive, Concord, NH 03301; or e-mail to advocacy@nhmunicipal.org no later than the close of business on **April 17, 2026**.

2026 Legislative Calendar

House Schedule

- **Thursday, April 16, 2026**—Last day to report Senate Bills going to a second committee.
- **Thursday, April 23, 2026**—Last day to act on Senate Bills going to a second committee.
- **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.

New Email Address!

There is a new email address to contact NHMA's legislative advocacy team: 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.

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[NHMA Events Calendar](#) [2025 Final Legislative Bulletin](#)

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