

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Legislative Bulletin 12

2024 Session

March 22, 2024



[Live Bill Tracker](#)

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## Approaching Crossover

Crossover, the unofficial halfway point of the legislative session, is Thursday, April 11. That is the last day for the House to act on House bills and for the Senate to act on Senate bills. We anticipate that the next few weeks will be busy as that deadline quickly approaches. This is a good time to take stock of the many bills affecting municipalities using NHMA's [live bill tracker](#). And on **Monday, April 15**, at **12:00 p.m.**, please join the Government Affairs staff for a webinar on the status of municipal bills still in play this session. The webinar is open to all NHMA members. [Registration](#) is now open.

## Local Control Prevails! HB 1479 Indefinitely Postponed

In a stunning victory **for** local control and local government, the House defeated [HB 1479](#), the anti-lobbying bill that would have criminalized YOUR speech, on a 211-129 vote yesterday. That defeat would not have been possible without YOUR advocacy.

What's more impressive is that a majority of the House determined that a tabling motion was not enough. The dispositional motion – Indefinitely Postpone – made it crystal clear that local control matters. We will be updating local officials with more information next

week, but if you want to know now how YOUR representative voted on the motion of Indefinitely Postpone, please take a look at the [roll call](#).

In NHMA's records of legislative testimony stretching back to the early 1980s, there is no bill that we have a record of that generated more outcry from local officials than this bill. We have not had any other bill in recent memory where so many local officials from across the state volunteered to come hand out information to legislators walking into the House chamber as **HB 1479**. Thank you for your advocacy.

We, of course, also need to thank our partners and friends who would have been affected by this legislation, who also contacted legislators and asked them to oppose **HB 1479**:

New Hampshire City and Town Clerks Association  
New Hampshire Building Officials Association  
New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police  
New Hampshire Association of Assessing Officers  
New Hampshire Association of Fire Chiefs  
New Hampshire Tax Collectors Association  
New Hampshire Health Officers Association  
New Hampshire Library Trustees Association  
New Hampshire Association of Counties  
New Hampshire School Boards Association  
New Hampshire Center for Non-Profits  
Business and Industry Association of New Hampshire  
NH AFL-CIO

Thank you to everyone who contacted representatives on this issue. Thanks to your support, membership organizations can continue to do **what their members want**.

## **RTK Bill Prevails with Floor Amendment!**

After a lengthy process in the House, [HB 1002](#), the “large Right-to-Know request” bill, went back to the House floor for a third, and, we hope, final time. The recommendation out of committee was Interim Study, but stakeholders, including the ACLU, NH Press Association, Right to Know NH, and NHMA, worked together with legislators from the Judiciary Committee to come up with [an amendment](#) that could be supported by a majority of stakeholders and legislators.

In a 193-179 vote, the House rejected the interim study. A subsequent vote saw the adoption of the agreed-to amendment; and, on a 268-106 vote, the House passed the amended version of **HB 1002**. The bill now heads to the Senate.

## House Votes to Reverse the SB 2 Adoption Process

On a vote of 173-163, the House narrowly passed [HB 1175](#), which would place the question of adopting the official ballot referendum form of town meeting (SB 2) on the official ballot. If ultimately enacted, this bill would reverse the important law change passed in 2019, which states that the question of SB 2 is voted on at the *business session* of the town meeting—not on the official ballot—like most other business. The current law ensures that voters have the opportunity for discussion and debate on the question of whether to change their form of government *before* voting—in addition to the pre-town meeting hearing that must be held on the question. The current process also ensures that the SB 2 vote occurs in the same manner as most other questions in a town with a “traditional” form of town meeting.

The bill will be scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate in the upcoming weeks, so we encourage all town officials to contact their [senator](#) to oppose this legislation.

## GET INVOLVED: NHMA'S 2025-2026 LEGISLATIVE POLICY PROCESS

### Deadline Approaching: Submit a Legislative Policy Proposal and Create Change

Time is almost up for municipalities to submit proposed legislative policies to NHMA to be considered as part of the legislative policy process. 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 through legislation, this is your opportunity to make a change.

*Use the [Legislative Policy Proposal Form](#) to submit a proposal for consideration. The deadline for submitting proposals is April 15, although earlier submission is encouraged. Please follow the instructions on the form for submitting your proposal.*

### Serve on a Legislative Policy Committee: Only a Few Spots Left!

*If you are a municipal official in a city or town and are interested in serving on one of the policy committees, please contact the Government Affairs staff at [governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org](mailto:governmentaffairs@nhmunicipal.org) no later than March 29.*

Each of the committees deals with a different set of municipal issues. The committees and their subject areas are as follows:

- Finance and Revenue – budgeting, revenue, tax exemptions, current use, assessing, tax collection, retirement issues, education funding.
- General Administration and Governance – elections, Right-to-Know Law, labor, town meeting, charters, welfare, public safety.
- Infrastructure, Development, and Land Use – solid/hazardous waste, transportation, land use, technology, environmental regulation, housing, utilities, code enforcement, economic development.

There will be an in-person organizational meeting for all committees on **Friday, April 5** at NHMA's offices in Concord.

**Bill Hearings Schedule**  
**NHMA Events Calendar**

**2023 Final Legislative Bulletin**

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

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

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