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2026 Legislative Update

SARAH BURKE COHEN, Esq.

BRODIE DESHAIES

MARTY KARLON



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The information and materials presented in NHMA's events is accurate as of the date of the presentation. NHMA's training events do not constitute legal advice. For legal advice, city and town officials may contact Legal Services at legalinquiries@nhmunicipal.org or their own municipality's legal counsel. Please refer to [NHMA's Legal Services FAQ](#) for details about how our service works. For Government Finance Advice, please contact financeinquiries@nhmunicipal.org.

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AGENDA

- Session Overview
- Key Bills by Topic
- Municipal Wins
- 2027 Preview
- Stay Engaged



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Session Overview



Bills Tracked by NHMA:

- Total—370
 - Support—95
 - Oppose—123
- Signed into law—45*
- Vetoed—7
- Killed/Interim Study/Tabled—271

1163 LSRs
filed

More than 90
LSRs
withdrawn or
8% of all bills
filed.

370 bills
tracked by
NHMA

One-third of
all bills filed
had a
municipal
component

** One bill became law without signature; as of 6/22/26*

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Hot Topics in 2026

- Municipal Operations
- Zoning and Land Use
- Risk Pools
- Town Meeting/Elections

See NHMA's Final Legislative Bulletin later this summer for a list of every bill that became law
<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/legislative-bulletins>



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Municipal Operations

HB 340: Updates the statute regarding electioneering by public employees (with governor; NHMA opposes)

HB 348: Allows municipalities to adopt an optional proof of residency requirement as part of their local welfare guidelines; requires welfare guidelines based on local market costs (signed by governor; NHMA supports)

HB 1184: Relative to issuing no trespass orders (with governor; NHMA neutral)

HB 1494: Increasing the maximum amount of the optional veterans' tax credit, optional combat service tax credit, and optional surviving spouse tax credit. (signed by governor; NHMA neutral)

HB 1118: Increasing the limit for moneys remitted to municipal treasurers (signed by governor; NHMA supports)

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Land Use/Zoning

HB 1010: Updates universal mixed-use zoning mandate allowing residential development in commercial zones (with governor; NHMA supports)

HB 1588: Allows multi-family dwelling units in commercial zone by right; prohibits municipalities from adding additional requirements (with governor; NHMA opposes)

SB 564: Prohibits municipal limits on dead-end road length and requires municipalities to allow developers to treat perimeter buffers as developable land (with governor; NHMA opposes)

HB 1079: Allowing accessory dwelling units to be built within or attached to certain non-conforming structures (with governor; NHMA opposes)

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Land Use/Zoning

HB 1195: Overrides local zoning ordinances related to in-home and commercial childcare in favor of state rulemaking; allows commercial childcare by right in all commercial zones and some industrial facilities; and exempts most facilities from local site plan review (with governor; NHMA opposes)

HB 1681: Enables municipalities to allow tiny houses and yurts as innovative housing structures (with governor; NHMA opposes)

SB 94: Removes ability of municipalities to make amendments if the state building code is more than two editions behind the published model codes (signed by governor; NHMA opposes)

HB 244: Updates and recodifies state building and fire code (with governor; NHMA supports)

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Risk Pools

Risk pools are created to shift 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.

HB 1491 (vetoed by governor; NHMA supports)

- Includes assessable risk pools in the statutory scheme, but as an alternative to non-assessable pools; assessable pools remain under Secretary of State; non-assessable pools shift to Department of Insurance
- Provides more cost-stable option for municipalities

SB 661 (vetoed by governor; NHMA opposes)

- Codifies assessable risk pools into the NH statutory scheme as the **only** allowable model
- Subjects risk pool members to potential unbudgeted, mid-year assessments

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Elections/Town Meeting

HB 1309: Requiring the intent and effect of warrant articles to be stated clearly, without commentary or ambiguity (signed by governor; NHMA opposes)

HB 1575: Mandates that the budget committee determine the default budget in official ballot (SB 2) towns, rather than the governing body (became law without governor's signature; NHMA opposes)

HB 1113: Enabling towns to establish a 3-year term for town moderators (signed by governor; NHMA supports)

HB 481: Moving the state primary date to June (signed by governor)

HB 365: Relative to proof of citizenship for indigent voters (signed by governor)

HB 1325: Enabling supervisors of the checklist to correct the checklist on any day of the week (signed by governor; NHMA supports)

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Other Bills

HB 707: Establishes solid waste site evaluation committee; does not preempt local zoning ordinances or existing legal agreements between towns and private entities (with governor; NHMA supports)

SB 538: Extends the eligibility terms for municipal energy projects to receive net metering compensation under alternative tariffs approved by the Public Utilities Commission (with governor; NHMA supports)

SB 593: Addresses loophole in the solid waste surcharge enacted last year that inadvertently left solid waste districts out of state rebate process (signed by governor; NHMA supports)

HB 164: Authorizes the state to create and maintain a website for electronic records and allows municipalities to store electronic records on the website (with governor; NHMA supports)

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No Changes in 2026

Right-to-Know Law: SB 626, an NHMA-supported effort to reduce “fishing expedition” requests from out-of-state vendors or AI bots, was tabled.

Retirement system: No New Hampshire Retirement System benefits-related legislation advanced in either chamber this year.

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Municipal Wins

- Broad expansion of municipal liability defeated
- Flawed data center bill tabled
- No changes to meals and rooms tax local distribution formula
- No automatic tax cap referendums or restrictions on bonding for cities and towns
- Attempt to give public employees the right to bargain individually failed
- Onerous incompatibility of office bill that would make it harder for small towns to fill vacancies was killed
- Pair of bills taking aim at NHMA's ability to advocate and at member municipalities' ability to govern the organization died in the House; a similar bill held over from last year were also killed

Thank you for helping NHMA on these issues!

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2027 Preview

- **Election year**
 - This will likely mean approximately 100 new legislators
- **State budget process begins**
 - Will infrastructure and housing programs be funded?
 - Will Meals and Rooms Tax revenue sharing be safe?
 - Will state keep its promise on Group II retirement funding?
- **More land use and zoning bills, including data center regulation or deregulation, Accessory Commercial Units (ACUs) mandate, and more**
- **Town Meeting procedures and local elections**
- **Right-to-Know Law**
- **Perennial legislation targeting NHMA advocacy**

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Current Balance of Power

Governor

Republican

<https://www.governor.nh.gov/>

Executive Council

4 Republicans, 1 Democrat

<https://www.council.nh.gov/>

Senate

16 Republicans and 8 Democrats

<https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/senate/>

House of Representatives (3/31/26)

214 Republicans, 176 Democrats, 1 Independent and 9 Vacant Seats

<https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/>

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2027-28 Legislative Policies & Principles

- To be voted on in September
- 16 Specific Policy Areas, and 13 Principles
- No Major Shifts in Policies or Principles
 - Rewrites and clarifications
 - Addition of policies related to key areas of legislative interest

Read NHMA's proposed
[2027-2028 Policies & Principles](https://www.nhmunicipal.org/sites/default/files/uploads/legislative-bulletins/LPP/2027-2028-proposed-policies-principles.pdf)

<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/sites/default/files/uploads/legislative-bulletins/LPP/2027-2028-proposed-policies-principles.pdf>

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What Can I Do?

Speak	Speak to your local legislators by phone or in person.
Invite	Invite your local legislators to a select board, council, or aldermen meeting.
Tell	Tell your constituents about important bills and explain their impact.
Write	Write a letter or a commentary to send to local media outlets.
Share	Share your concerns about specific bills or issues with the Governor's office.
Talk	Talk to NHMA to get additional background on these bills.
Attend	Attend the public hearings on bills important to your municipality and sign up to testify.

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Connect With Us

Legislative Bulletin

NHMA's weekly *Legislative Bulletin* is published every Friday during the session, with a final edition in late summer. Members can subscribe to the emailed Bulletin through our member portal at: <https://nhmunicipal.weblinkconnect.com/portal>

- Once you are logged in, click "edit this profile" and "newsletter management." You can sign up for the Legislative Bulletin, *Newslink*, and *Town & City* magazine in one place!

Priority Bill Alerts

Throughout the legislative session, NHMA also sends out priority bill alerts asking members to take action on specific bills coming up for a hearing or a vote.

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Fast Democracy

ALL BILLS

NHMA Supports

NHMA Opposes

Bills by Topic:

Municipal Managers, Administrators, Select Boards And Councils

Planning / Zoning / Land Use

Right-To-Know

State Aid

MUNICIPAL BUDGET

PROPERTY TAX

RETIREMENT

Education Funding

TAX COLLECTORS

TRUSTEE OF THE TRUST FUND

HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS / LABOR LAW

Information Technology

LIBRARIES

LOCAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

MODERATORS AND OTHER ELECTION OFFICIALS

Conservation Commission

Energy

PUBLIC HEALTH

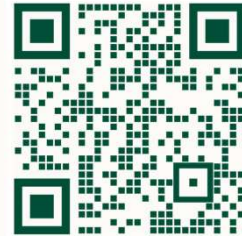
PUBLIC SAFETY

PUBLIC WORKS

Finance - All Bills

SOLID WASTE

TOWN AND CITY CLERKS



[NHMA Bill Tracker: FastDemocracy](#)

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**SARAH BURKE
COHEN**

Legislative
Advocate

**BRODIE
DESHAIES**

Legislative
Advocate

**MARTY
KARLON**

Policy & Research
Analyst

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CONTACT ADVOCACY TEAM

Phone: 603.230.3376

Email: advocacy@nhmunicipal.org

Address: 25 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 210, Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Members of the NHMA Advocacy Team follow several hundred bills of interest to municipalities during each legislative session. They draft legislation to carry out NHMA's legislative policies, monitor legislative hearings, testify on bills when appropriate, and work individually with legislators and local officials throughout the process. The staff also follows numerous study committees, commissions, boards, and state administrative agencies, commenting on and assisting in the development of proposed agency rules. On occasion, staff members also work with New Hampshire's U.S. congressional delegation on federal legislation affecting municipalities.

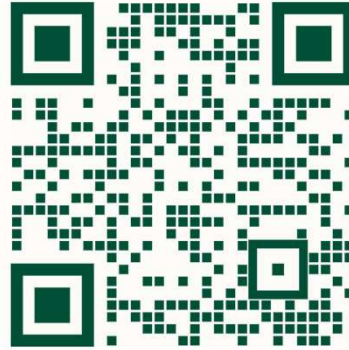
Every Friday during the legislative session, the NHMA Advocacy Team publishes the Legislative Bulletin, which notifies local officials of upcoming hearings, votes on important issues, and details of legislative activity during the past week, along with methods of contacting legislators on bills of municipal importance.

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Questions?

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MEMBER FEEDBACK



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CONTACT NHMA

Phone: 603.224.7447

Email: info@nhmunicipal.org

Address: 25 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 210, Concord, New Hampshire 03301

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Our Vision

NHMA is known as the premier source of information and support needed for town and city officials to effectively serve the public.

Our Mission

NHMA supports effective municipal government by leveraging the collaborative strengths of New Hampshire cities and towns through education, training, advocacy, and legal services.

Our History

The New Hampshire Municipal Association, Inc. (NHMA) is a nonprofit, non-partisan membership organization of municipalities. Founded in 1941 for the purpose of exchanging information to facilitate more efficient and effective local government, NHMA was reorganized in July 2003 under the umbrella of the New Hampshire Local Government Center (LGC). At that time all services provided to municipalities by NHMA were assumed by LGC except legislative advocacy, which remained in NHMA LLC, a separate subsidiary of LGC. In the fall of 2012 all "traditional municipal league services" including legislative advocacy, legal advisory services, training programs, and educational publications, were consolidated under NHMA with oversight by the NHMA Board of Directors. Currently, NHMA, Inc. operates as a totally separate, independent organization from the former LGC risk pools (HealthTrust, Inc. and Property Liability Trust, Inc.) with a board comprising only elected and appointed municipal officials elected by NHMA members.