



Lakes & Legislation:

~~Preview~~ of the 2025 New Hampshire Legislative Session

January 21, 2025

Andrea LaMoreaux, President & Policy Advocate, NH LAKES



New Hampshire House of Representatives

New Hampshire Legislature

- House of Representatives: 400 members
- Senate: 24 Senators
- Third-largest legislative body in the English-speaking world
- Legislators are elected and serve for two year terms (a biennium)
- First year of biennium is a budget year (*that's this year!*)
- Meets in session from approximately January to June



New Hampshire Senate

Who's in the 2025 Legislature?

- House of Representatives: 400
 - 221 Republicans
 - 177 Democrats
 - 1 Independent
 - 1 Vacancy

- Senate: 24
 - 16 Republicans (supermajority)
 - 8 Democrats



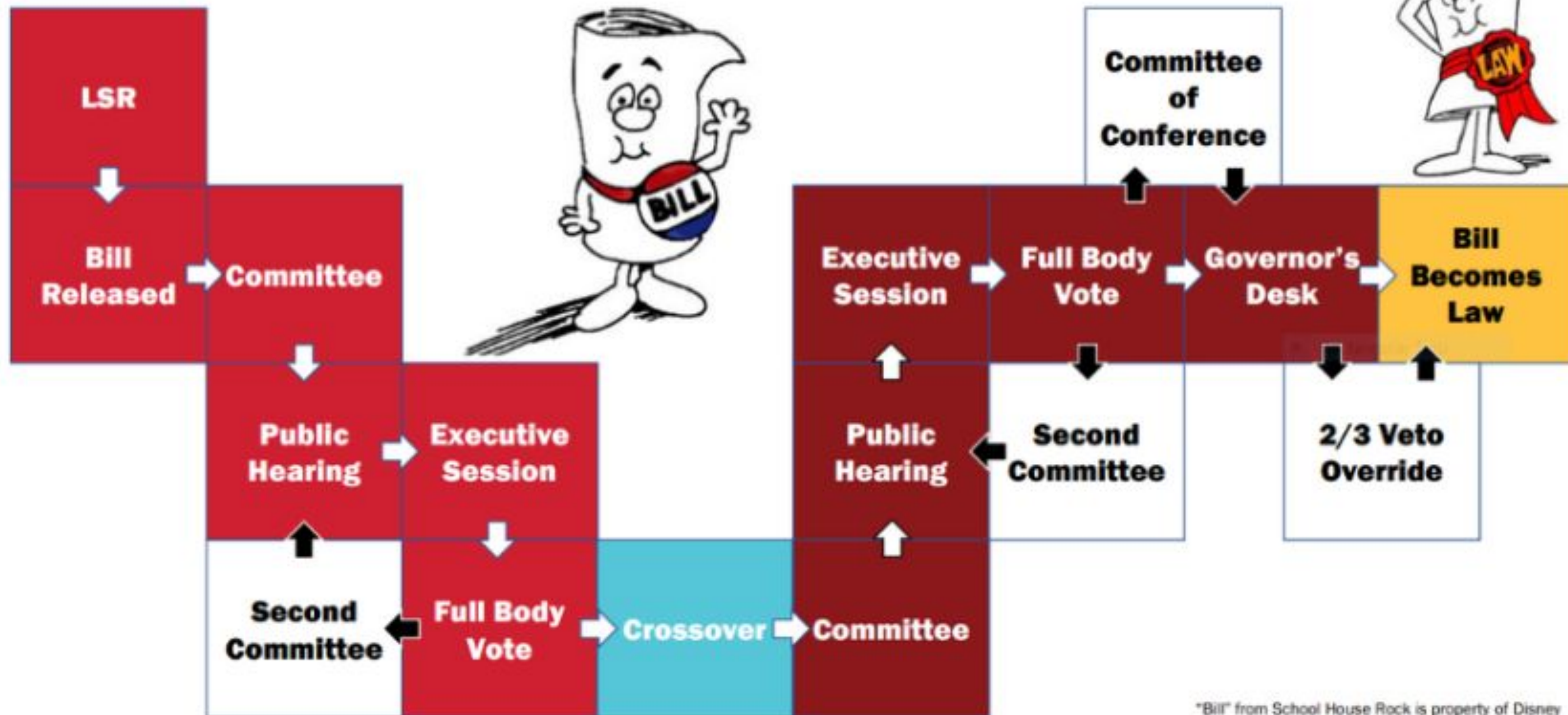
Approximately 1,155 bills will be considered during the first year of this 169th Session.



“How does a bill become a law in New Hampshire?”



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Bill from School House Rock is property of Disney

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 1: Introducing a Bill



- A Representative or Senator may sponsor a bill.
- They file a Legislative Service Request (LSR) to the office of Legislative Services (OLS).
- The LRS states the title only.
- This occurs in the fall prior to the session.



How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 2: Bill Text Released



- The LSR becomes a bill once it is written by OLS and approved by the bill sponsor.
- If the sponsor is a representative, the bill starts in the House and becomes a House Bill (HB)
- If the sponsor is a senator, the bill starts in the Senate and becomes a Senate Bill (SB).
- The bill is assigned a number (HB#/SB#)
- This occurs during late-December/early-January.



Legislative Office Building

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 3: Committee Assignment



The bill is assigned a committee based on its topic.



House Committee
(26 committees)



Senate Committee
(13 committees)

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 4: Public Hearing



- Every bill gets a hearing in New Hampshire!
- Hearings are announced at least 72 hours in advance through the House/Senate Calendar.
- At the public hearing, supporting and opposing testimony is heard from all interested parties.
- Hearings can be watched online in real time or after the fact.



How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 5: Committee Deliberation



Committee deliberation is done in an executive session that the public may observe.

Committee votes on a recommendation for the bill:

- **Ought to Pass (OTP):** the bill should pass
- **Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL):** the bill should not pass
- **Ought to Pass as Amended (OTP-A):** the bill should not pass without an amendment added by the committee
- **Re-refer to Committee:** bill should be studied further in committee during the next legislative session (only occurs during 1st year of biennium)
- **Refer to Interim Study:** the bill should be studied further between legislative sessions (if this occurs during the 2nd year of biennium, the bill dies)



Second Committee: Sometimes a bill is sent to a second committee. This often happens if there is a fiscal note (FN), meaning a financial component to the bill.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 6: Floor Vote



- The bill goes to the full House or Senate for a vote.
- A committee member presents the committee's decision.
- Floor debate may follow.
- After debate, the full body votes on the Committee's decision.



New Hampshire House of Representatives

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 7: Crossover

- If the bill passes, it is sent to the other legislative body and the same process repeats.
- This occurs during late-March and early April.



New Hampshire State House

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Steps 8 – 12: Process Repeats



- *Fewer bills need to be heard at this point as they did not pass and cross-over.*
- The bill is assigned to a committee in the other body.
- A public hearing is held.
- The committee votes on a recommendation.
- The bill is voted on by the full body.



How a Bill Becomes a Law

Steps 8 – 12: Process Repeats – Amended Bills



If the bill passes, but includes a new amendment approved by the 2nd body, there are two options:

- 1st legislative body approves the amendment
- 1st legislative body does not approve and the bill goes to a Committee of Conference

If the legislators cannot agree, the bill dies.



How a Bill Becomes a Law

Step 13: Governor's Desk



If the bill passes, both bodies, it goes to the Governor.

The Governor has three choices:

- Sign the bill into law
- Allow the bill to become law without a signature
- Veto the bill

The Governor's veto may be overridden by a 2/3 majority vote in both houses.

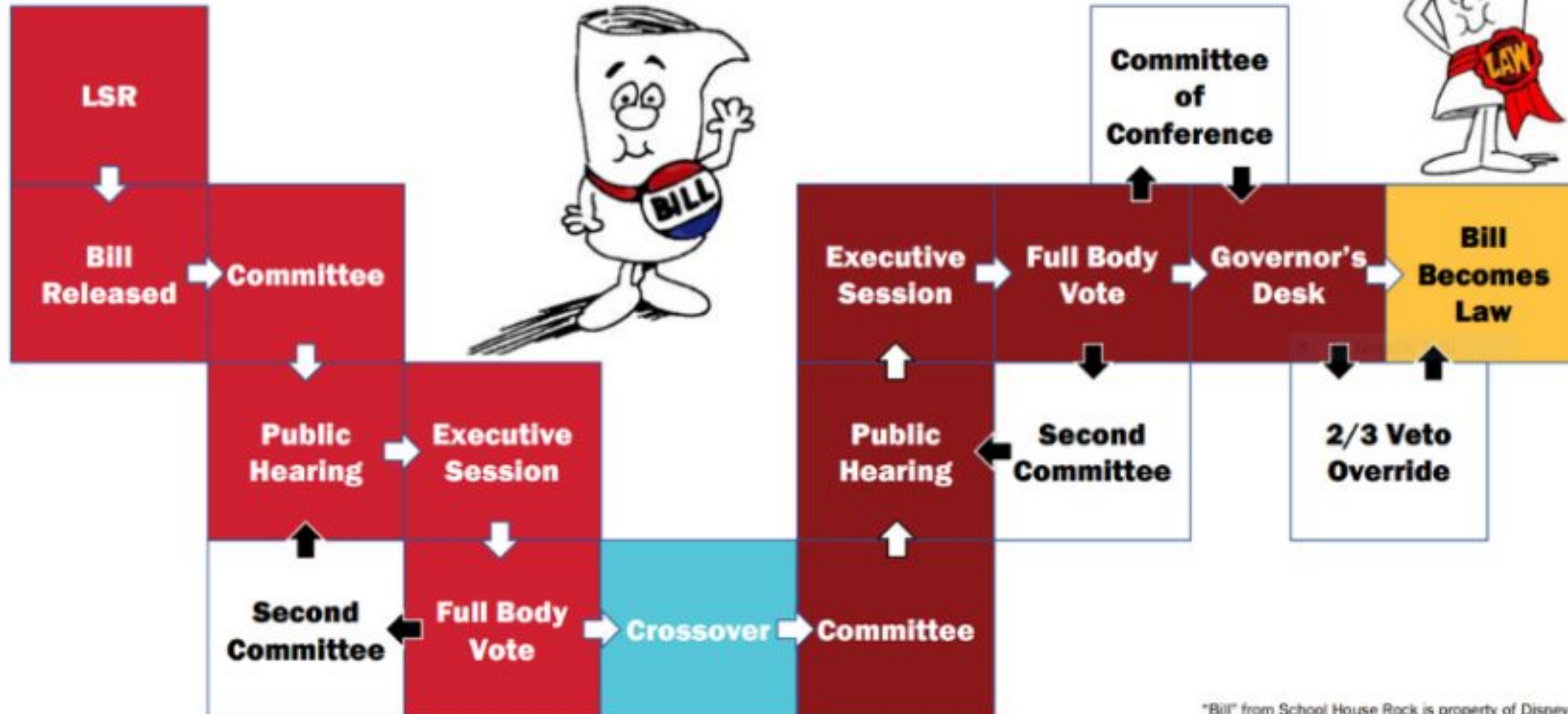
If an override occurs, the bill becomes a law.



In Summary:



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Bill from School House Rock is property of Disney



“What’s in store for our lakes this session?”



Our Core Advocacy Issues



**Aquatic Invasive Species
Prevention & Management**



**Shoreland & Wetland
Protection**



**Water Quality Restoration
& Protection**

2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 105, creating a “Love NH Lakes” license plate

- This special license plate would feature a loon on a lake and be available at a cost of \$30 per year.
- Proceeds would go to the NH Dept. of Environmental Services Cyanobacteria Mitigation Loan and Grant Fund to help lake associations and other groups reduce pollution fueling cyanobacteria blooms
- There is no sustainable funding source for the fund.
- Cyanobacteria blooms are increasing in frequency and severity, threatening public health, property values, tourism, and the economy.
- NH LAKES Position: **SUPPORT**
- Hearing: House Transportation Committee, 1/21/25 (earlier today!)



2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 291, removing certain penalties for the incorrect application of lawn fertilizer

- During 2024, we helped override the Governor's veto on a bill limiting the amount of phosphorus in lawn fertilizer and making it illegal to apply it near storm drains, before/during rain, on frozen ground.
- Fertilizer accelerates plant, algal, and cyanobacteria growth in lakes.
- NH LAKES supports this bill's intent to downgrade infractions of the law from a criminal penalty to a violation, but does not support removing fines. Fines serve as important deterrents.
- NH LAKES Position: **OPPOSE, request amendment for fines**
- Hearing: Criminal Justice and Public Safety (1/24/25 - this Friday!)



2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Watershed & Shoreland Protection



HB 332, allowing for the establishment of village district to protect and remediate surface waters

- *Enables* multiple municipalities surrounding a lake to *voluntarily* form a village district in an area around the lake to protect and restore lake health.
- One governing body around the lake dedicated to protecting and improving lake health could:
 - result in more efficient/effective approaches for the lake-friendly management of the landscape and activities
 - take the burden off of individual town governments for lake protection
 - result in consistent regulations reducing confusion for residents
 - benefit residents with special programs and technical support
- NH LAKES Position: **Support (clarify for watershed and lake management within the district)**
- Hearing: Resources, Recreation and Development (1/22/25 - tomorrow!)



2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Protection & Sustainable Use



HB 397, establishing a multi-agency task force chaired by the Dept. of Safety

- Creates a multi-agency task force to identify solutions to increase law enforcement presence and patrols on New Hampshire waterways.
- There are longstanding concerns about the lack of law enforcement presence on public waters to enforce boating safety and water quality laws.
- There are various challenges/barriers within and among state agencies to provide a consistent and adequate law enforcement presence on our lakes.
- NH LAKES Position: **Support**
- Hearing: House Criminal Justice and Public Safety (1/24/25 - this Friday!)



2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 416-FN, prohibiting the intentional disposal of yard waste into surface waters

- Prohibits the intentional disposal of yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, garden debris) into surface waters and provides a penalty for doing so.
- Yard debris dumped into lakes adds nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) that fuel the excessive growth of plants, algae, and cyanobacteria.
- This prohibition would heighten awareness among those who manage yards around lakes, helping to foster a culture of lake preservation.
- NH LAKES Position: **SUPPORT**
- Hearing: House Criminal Justice and Public Safety (1/22/25 - tomorrow!)



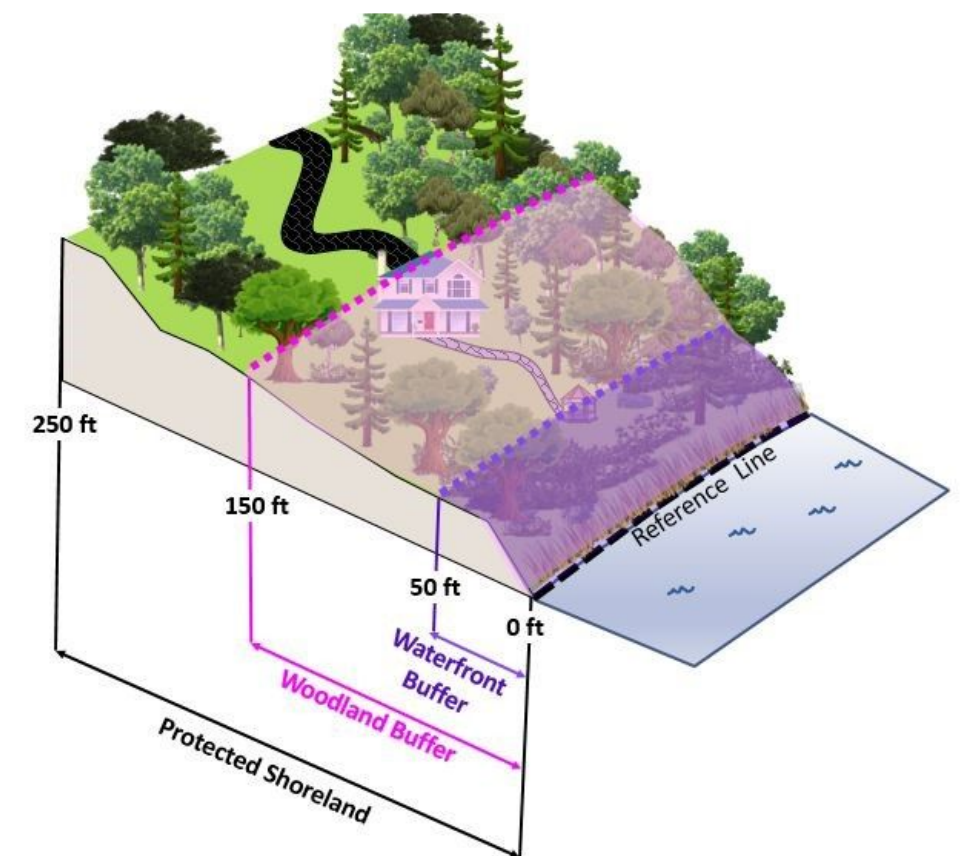
2025 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Shoreland & Wetland Protection



HB 442-FN, increasing penalties for the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act

- Increases the penalty that the NH Dept. of Environmental Services *may* levy for violations the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (SWQPA) from \$5,000 to *up to* \$15,000 per violation.
- The SWQPA establishes a protected shoreland area close to lakes and rivers where vegetation removal, excavation/fill, fertilizer use, and development activities are regulated to safeguard waterbody health.
- Increasing fines may serve as an increased deterrent for people to knowingly violate the Act. The fines have not increased with inflation.
- NH LAKES Position: **SUPPORT**
- Hearing: Resources, Recreation & Development 1/22/2025 (tomorrow!)



Wakesports Update

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



- During the 2024 session, we defended our lakes against allowing the boating industry's national model legislation of a 200-foot shoreline setback for wakesurfing being cemented into law in NH.
- There is no wakesports legislation proposed for the 2025 session.
- Additional studies have been published documenting that further setbacks and minimum depth requirements for wakesports are critical to protect waterbody health.
- Stay tuned and continue to try to work within your communities to resolve conflicts on the water.





NH LAKES works with New Hampshire legislators, state agency staff, and partners to submit and support bills that will help restore and preserve our lakes. While NH LAKES takes strong positions of support or opposition on some bills, we also track many bills as they move through the legislative process, so we can respond if they become essential to our cause. Learn more about some of the bills we support and track.

2025 Legislative Tracking

[CLICK HERE](#) for the bills that NH LAKES is tracking.

And, we're monitoring and weighing in on many more bills related to lakes, too!

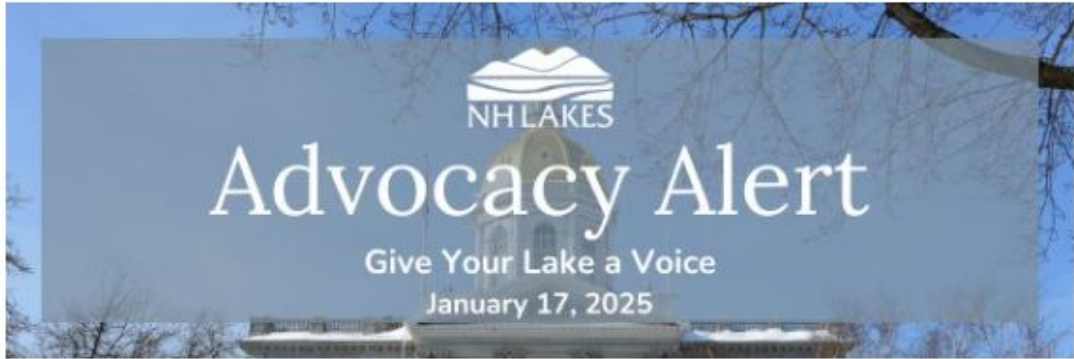
Visit our website for our legislative tracking sheet:

nhlakes.org/state-government



“So, how can I help give our lakes a voice in the legislature this session?”





Dear Andrea,


The New Hampshire 2025 Legislative Session is in full swing, and our lakes **NEED YOU** to share your support for four lake-friendly bills that will be heard next week! Each of these bills aims to reduce pollution in our lakes feeding excessive plant and algae growth and increasing cyanobacteria blooms. If passed, these bills would help foster a culture of lake preservation throughout New Hampshire.

With many newly elected legislators, now more than ever, our lakes need you to contact committee members to let them know you support these bills and why they should, too. Read on below to learn more and follow the simple steps to make your voice heard.

I'm excited to continue supporting you as your legislative advocate. I want to make your job advocating for our lakes as easy as possible. Please reach out to me with questions and suggestions along the way this session.

Working together to protect the lakes we all love,

Andrea LaMoreaux, President & Policy Advocate
alamoreaux@nhlakes.org



P.S. On Tuesday, January 22, at 7:00 p.m., be sure to tune in to our webinar "Lakes & Legislation: Preview of the 2025 New Hampshire Legislative Session." This webinar is FREE, but registration is required and space is limited. Register TODAY—[click here](#).

THESE FOUR LAKE-FRIENDLY BILLS NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Sign up to receive our timely *Advocacy Alert* enews.

Sign up at: nhlakes.org
(scroll to the bottom of the page)



MEETING RESOURCES

House

[House Sign-in Form and Online Testimony Submission](#)

[View House Online Testimony Submissions](#)

[House Remote Sign In/Submit/View Testimony Directions \(PDF\)](#)

Senate

[Senate Remote Sign In](#)

[Senate Remote Sign In Directions \(PDF\)](#)

Sign in on-line in support or opposed to bills and include a statement or upload your letter of testimony.

Numbers and personal stories can make a BIG impact on legislators.

www.gencourt.state.nh.us



Step 1. Personal Information
All fields required

First

Last

Town

State

Email Address

Step 2. Select Date of the Hearing

January 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	
	5	6	7	8	9	

Step 3. Select Bill
* Required fields

Select the Committee *

Choose the Bill *

I am *

I'm Representing *

Indicate Your Position on this Bill *

Support this Bill Oppose this Bill I'm neutral on this Bill

Testimony is for non-germane amendment

Step 4. Upload Remote Testimony (Optional)
Attach document below by clicking the Choose File button and selecting your file (PDF Format Only - 2MB Maximum file size)

No file chosen

OR

Type your testimony Below

Step 5. Final Review
Attention: Information and testimony submitted on this form is entered in to the public record for each piece of legislation and will be considered public records subject to disclosure under the Right To Know Law. Do not submit any personal information you do not wish to disclose publicly. The sign-in sheet will close for purposes of registering your opinion at 11:59 p.m. the day of the hearing.

Sign in on-line in support or opposed to bills and include a statement or upload your letter of testimony.

Numbers and personal stories can make a BIG impact on legislators.

www.gencourt.state.nh.us



Attend hearings, and consider testifying!

If you plan to attend a hearing, please let me know so we can coordinate and I can let you know what to expect.

Tips on testifying:

nhlakes.org/contact-your-representatives



By advocating for our lakes, you will help ensure New Hampshire becomes a place where all lakes are clean and healthy, and caring for them is a way of living, doing business, and governing.

Thank you!