



Lakes & Legislation:

Preview of the 2026 New Hampshire Legislative Session

January 14, 2026

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New Hampshire House of Representatives

New Hampshire Legislature

- **House of Representatives: 400 members**
- **Senate: 24 members**
- **Third-largest legislative body in the English-speaking world!**
- **Legislators are elected and serve for two year terms (a biennium)**
- **Meets in session January to June**
- **2026 is the second year of the biennium (not a budget year, finalizing legislation from 1st year, elections at the end of this year)**



New Hampshire Senate

Who's in the 2026 Legislature?

- House of Representatives: 400
 - ~ 222 Republicans
 - ~ 178 Democrats
- Senate: 24
 - 16 Republicans (supermajority)
 - 8 Democrats



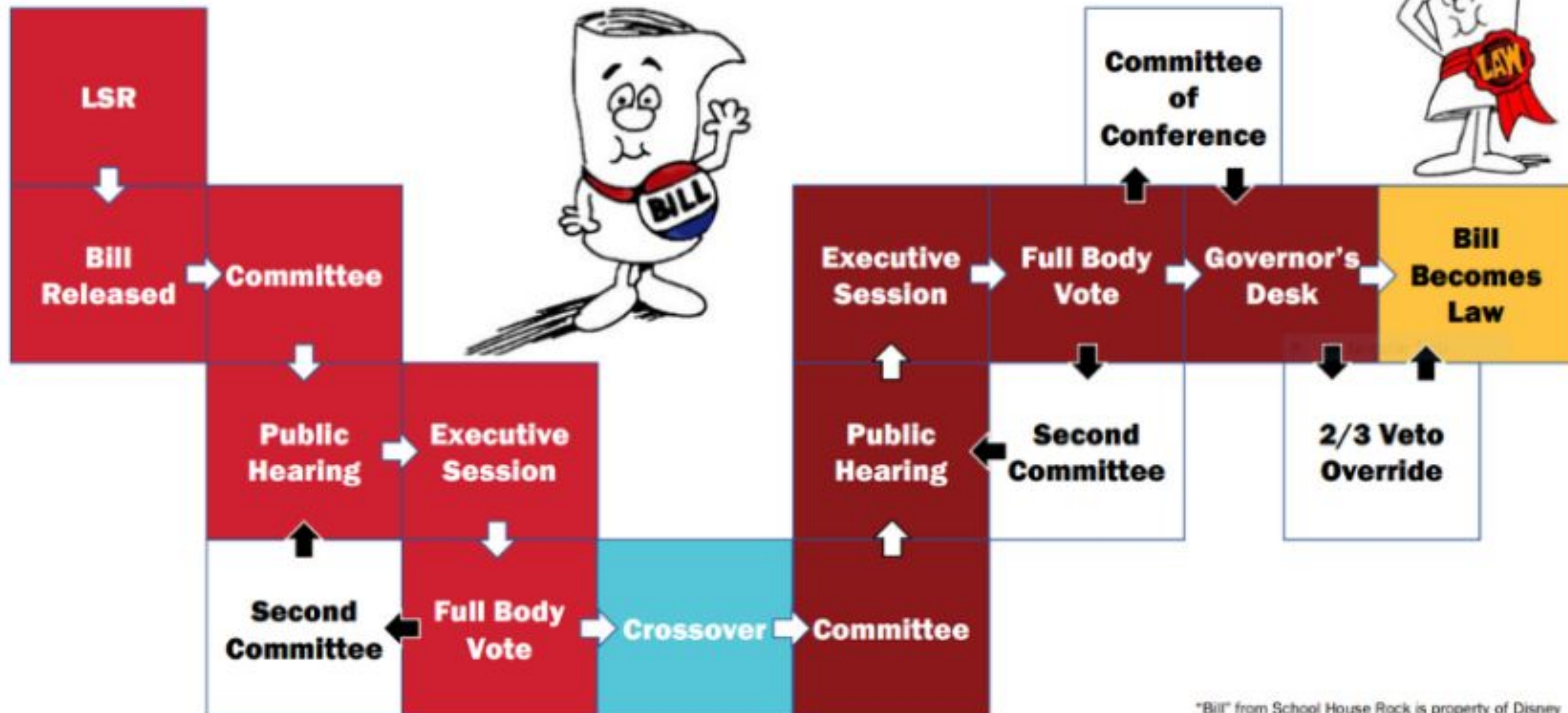
Approximately **1,100 bills** will be considered during this second year of this 169th Session.



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



new**futures**>>>



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.



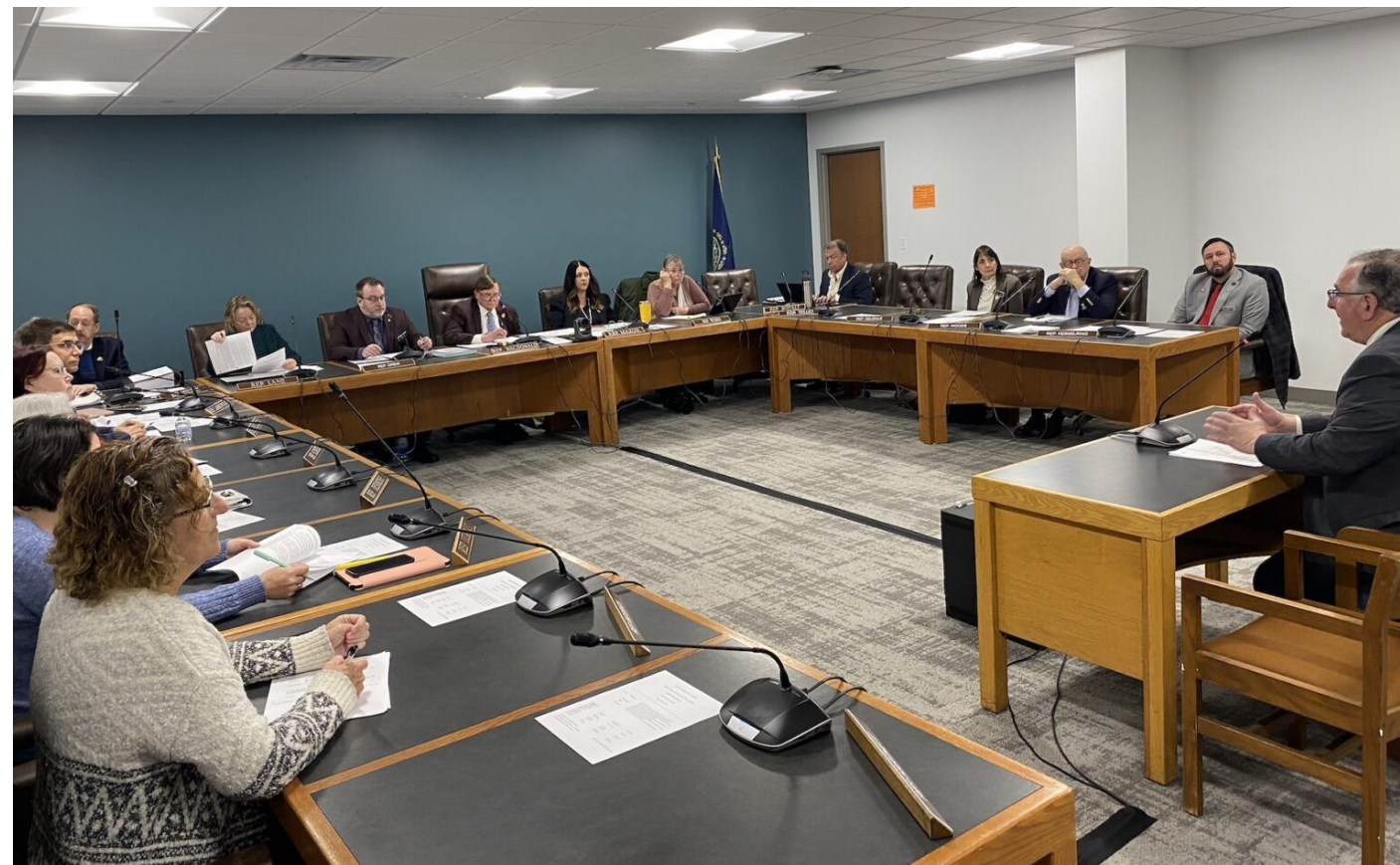
Legislative Office Building

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)

**NOTE: In 2026, House Committees
will meet at 1 Granite Place!**

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:

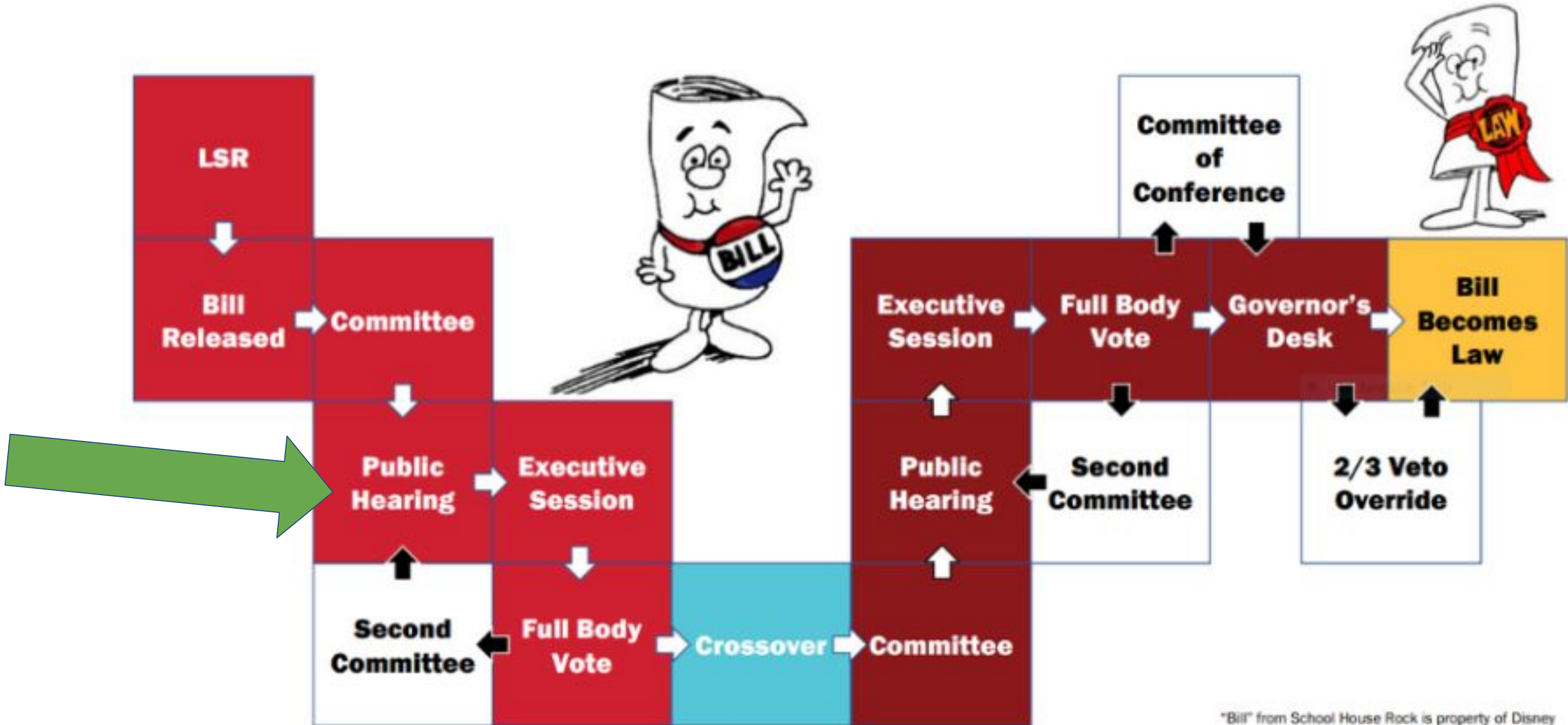
- Sign the bill into law
- Allow the bill to become law without a signature
- Veto the bill

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:



"Bill" from School House Rock is property of Disney

Your NH LAKES Advocacy Team



Andrea

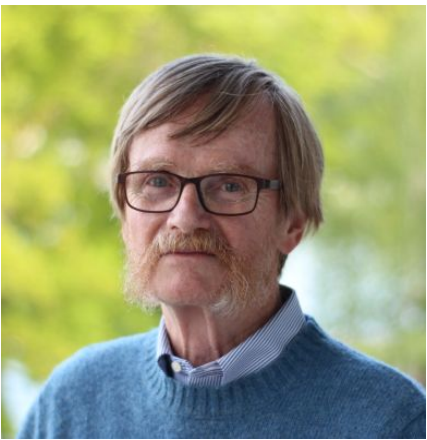


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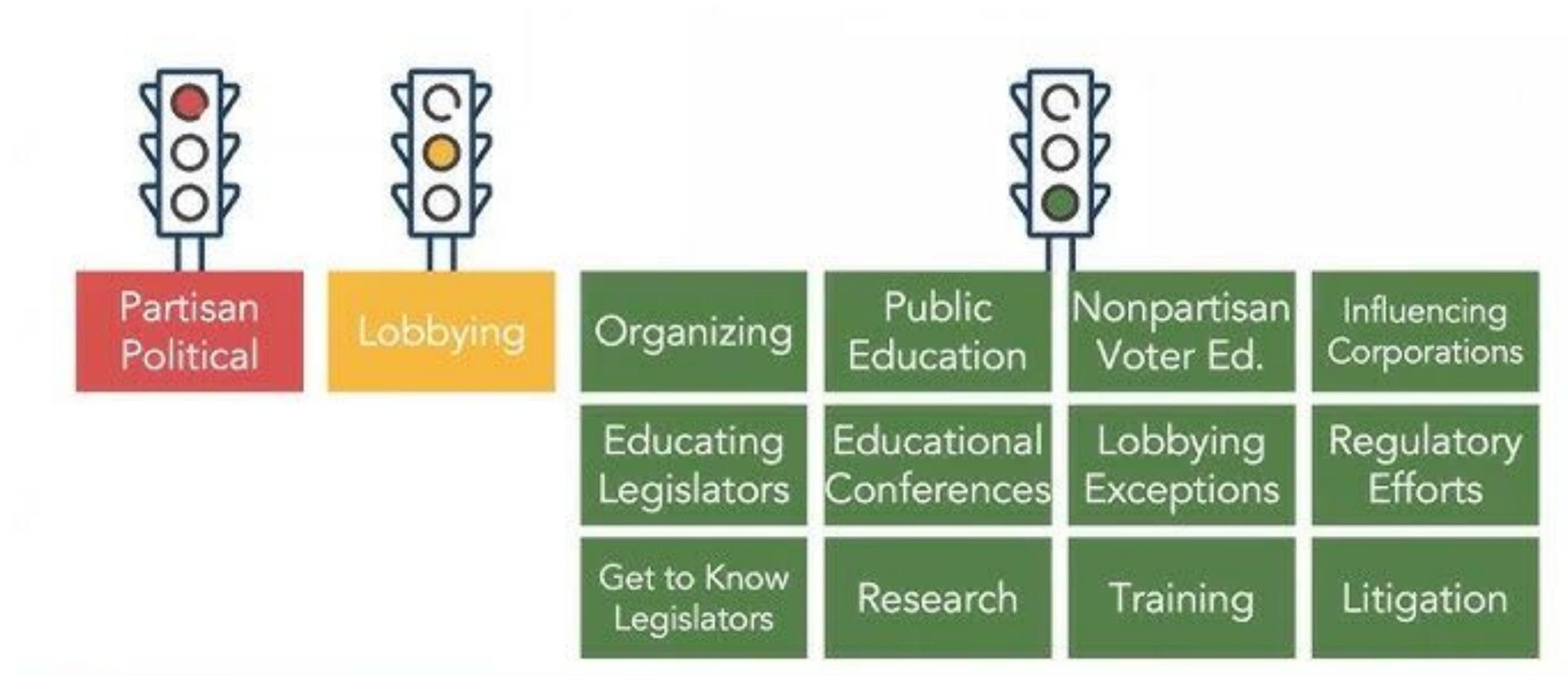
Samantha

Registered Lobbyists



NH LAKES Public Policy & Advocacy Committee

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization we engage in ISSUE ADVOCACY



- We engage in issue advocacy and have registered lobbyists.
- We do not endorse parties or candidates or contribute to parties or candidates.
- We do not accept money from corporations.

Our Core Advocacy Issues



Shoreland & Wetland
Protection



Water Quality Restoration
& Protection



Aquatic Invasive Species
Prevention & Management



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



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 1020: Proclaiming Lake Winnepesaukee the official state lake of NH

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Maggiore (North Hampton)
- **What:** This bill was the idea of a 4th grade class!
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** House Resources, Recreation and Development (TBD)



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1607: Relative to the use and storage of salt

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Rosemarie Rung (Merrimack)
- **What:** Requires DES to develop and issue regulations that specify proper storage and management practices for ice control chemicals for snow and ice control
- **Impact:** Protect ground and surface water quality; Estimated increase state expenditures (\$10k-\$100K annually) and increase local expenditures (\$10K-\$500k)
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** January 13, 10:30 am, House Public Works and Highways



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1810: Relative to a road salt fee to support certified winter road maintenance practices

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Will Darby (Nashua, Ward 8)
- **What:** Establishes new road salt fee and mitigation program (\$4/ton fee) on bulk road salt, road salt mix, and brine sold in NH. Fees to be deposited into new Road Salt Mitigation Fund providing grants to state agencies, municipalities, and businesses to implement salt reduction best management practices.
- **Impact:** Estimated revenue at \$1.6 million annually
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** January 12, 11:30 am, House Ways and Means



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 1148: Adding cyanobacteria and algae blooms to the study of exotic aquatic weeds and species committee

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Tanya Donnelly (Salem)
- **What:** Requires existing stakeholder committee to examine factors contributing to blooms and relationship between invasive plants, nutrients, and blooms
- **Impact:** Committee members expertise will aid NH Dept. of Environmental Services in mitigating blooms
- **NH LAKES Position:** Support
- **Hearing:** House Resources, Recreation and Development (TBD)



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 1301: Increasing certain mooring fees and directing such funds to the cyanobacteria mitigation and grant fund

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. John MacDonald (Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro)
- **What:** Increases fee from \$25 to \$50, with \$25 to be deposited into fund
- **Impact:** Could generate between \$68,750 and \$80,000 annually (mooring permits are required on 8 lakes)
- **NH LAKES Position:** Support
- **Hearing:** January 14, 11:30 am, Resources, Recreation & Development



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 1477: Relative to permitting and regulation of anchored seasonal floating platforms on public waters

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. John MacDonald (Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro)
- **What:** Establishes a new permit program for anchored seasonal platforms and an annual fee of \$50, \$25 of which would go to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund (\$100 fine)
- **Impact:** Revenue unknown; Could cost the dept. \$150-\$175K to implement program
- **NH LAKES Position:** Support
- **Hearing:** Jan. 14, 2:30 pm, House Resources, Recreation and Development



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



SB 598: Establishing the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force

- **Prime Sponsor:** Sen. Mark McConkey (District 3)
- **What:** 9-member task force to investigate potential long-term sustainable funding options. Recommendations due November 2026.
- **Impact:** Sen. McConkey hopes to raise \$1-\$2 million annually
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** Senate Energy and Natural Resources (TBD)



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



SB 493: relative to cyanobacteria and other water quality issues

- **Prime Sponsor:** Sen. David Watters (District 4)
- **What:** Enabling legislation to allow village districts to be formed by vote to engage in cyanobacteria mitigation and water quality protection
- **Impact:** Would allow village districts to cross municipal boundaries to address these issues and vote to raise revenue, apply for grants, and share expenses
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** Senate Energy and Natural Resources (TBD)



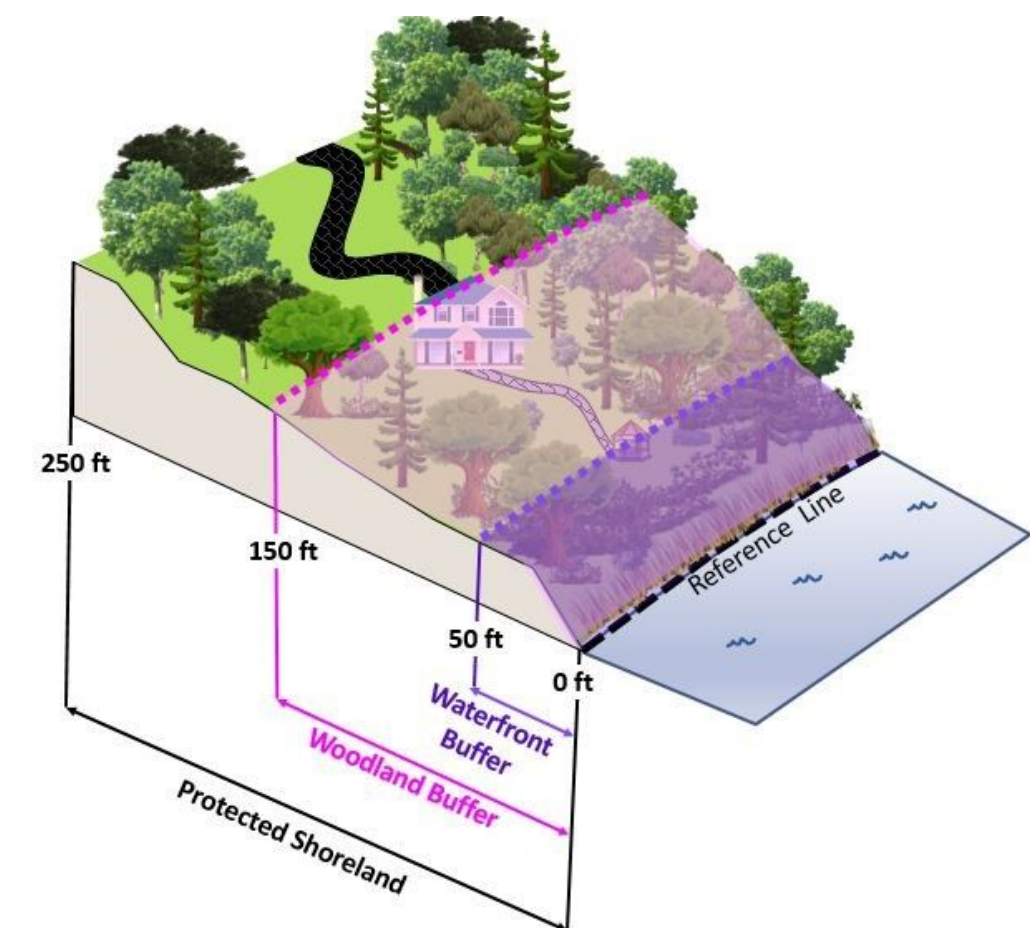
2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Shoreland Protection



HB 1540: Establishing uniform requirements for accessory dwelling units and providing municipalities with authority and guidance for zoning, permitting, and environmental protections

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. David Fracht (Enfield)
- **What:** Restores a municipality's right to decide whether or not to allow detached ADUs in the Protected Shoreland and whether ADUs are allowed by right or by conditional use permit or special exception there.
- **Impact:** Discretionary approval by towns could help prevent over development near lakes causing erosion, nutrient pollution, and water quality degradation
- **NH LAKES Position:** **Support**
- **Hearing:** Jan. 22, 1:30 pm, Granite Place 228, House Housing



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1614: Restricting the use of coal tar based sealant products containing levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Allison Knab (Stratham)
- **What:** Starting Jan. 2027, individuals and businesses would be banned from selling or applying these carcinogenic coal tar sealants on driveways and parking lots. These products can be toxic to aquatic life.
- **Impact:** Protect aquatic life, minimal financial impact, alternatives are available
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** House Commerce and Consumer Affairs (TBD)



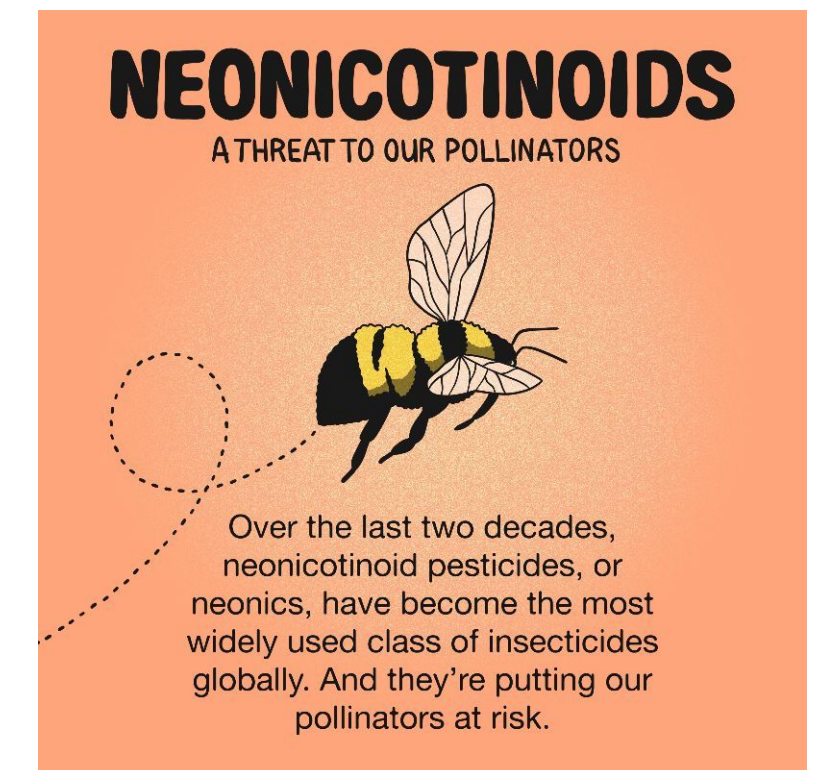
2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration and Protection



HB 1431: Restricting the use of neonicotinoid pesticides

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. John MacDonald (Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro)
- **What:** Reclassify these pesticides so that they can only be applied by state-certified applicators and sold by licensed dealers. Non-agricultural use will be prohibited. Department of Agriculture to develop an education program. Establishes penalties for violation.
- **Impact:** “Neonic” insecticides commonly contaminate surface waters, harming aquatic life, and possibly creating conditions that favor cyanobacteria blooms
- **NH LAKES Position:** Support
- **Hearing:** January 13, 9:00 am, House Environment and Agriculture (TBD)



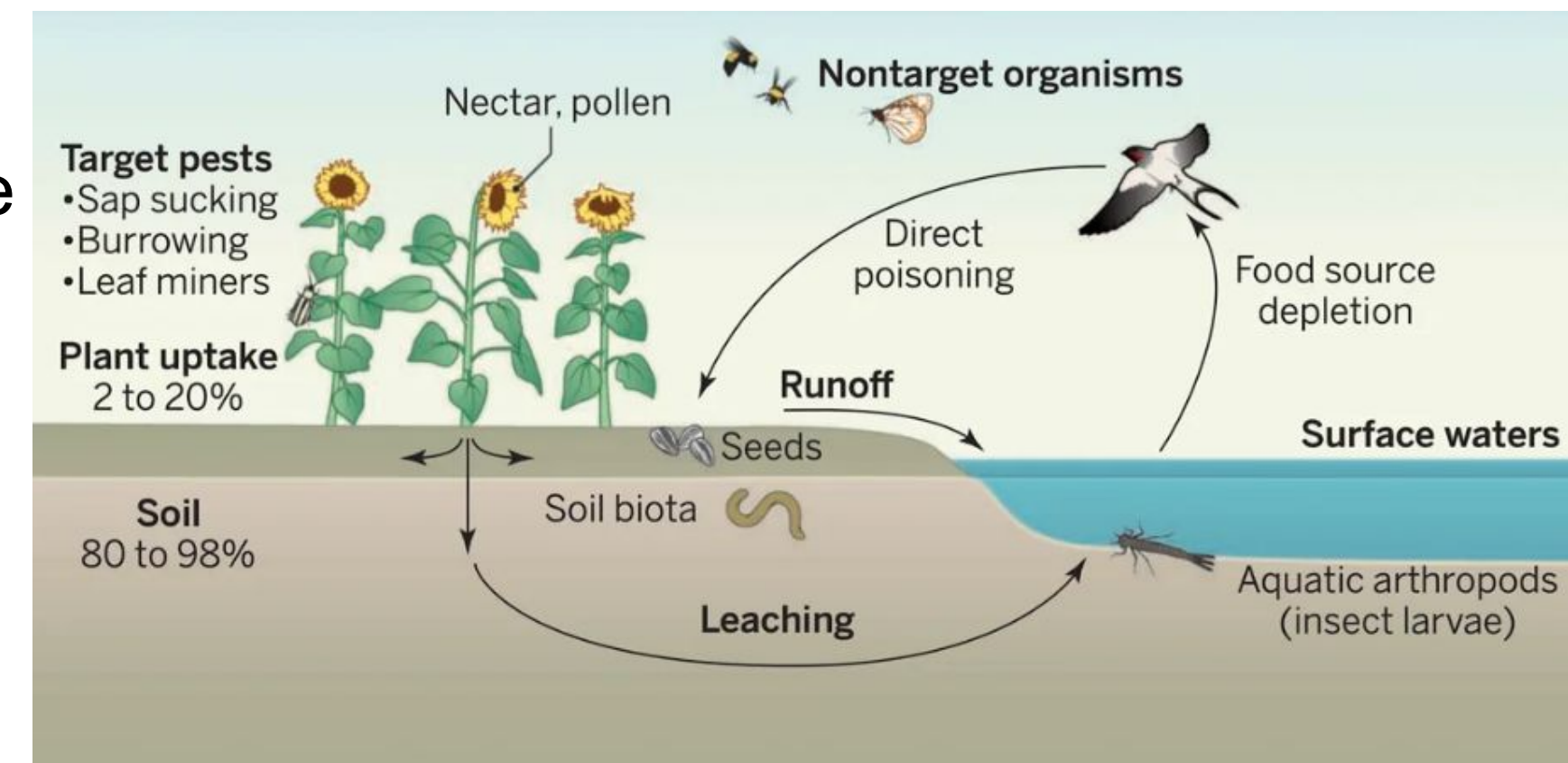
2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1086: Prohibiting the sale of certain agricultural seeds treated with neonicotinoids

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. John MacDonald (Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro)
- **What:** Prohibits the sale or use of corn, wheat, or soybean seeds if such seeds have been treated with neonicotinoids.
- **Impact:** “Neonic” insecticides commonly contaminate surface waters, harming aquatic life, and possibly creating conditions that favor cyanobacteria blooms
- **NH LAKES Position:** **SUPPORT**
- **Hearing:** January 13, 10 am, House Environment and Agriculture



Fate of and exposure of “neonics” when applied as a seed coating.

2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1655-FN: Establishing a funding source for maintaining state owned dams

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Will Darby (Nashua, Ward 8)
- **What:** Establishes new funding mechanism for maintaining state owned dams. Municipalities to assess \$100 annual fee for property with direct waterfront access and \$50 for deeded access.
- **Impact:** Could generate \$3 Million annually; \$16 Million is needed annually
- **NH LAKES Position: **OPPOSED**.** A comprehensive funding solution must be found. This bill unfairly puts the burden on property owners when many other groups benefit from lakes impounded by dams.
- **Hearing:** Jan. 21, 3:15 pm, House Resources, Recreation and Development



2026 Legislative Session: Priority Bills

Water Quality Restoration & Protection



HB 1649: Prohibiting certain tax dollars from being donated to nonprofit organizations

- **Prime Sponsor:** Rep. Lorie Ball (Salem)
- **What:** Restricts direct financial donations to nonprofits from local government budgets. Allows two exceptions by permitting funds to go to nonprofits through competitive grants, and by allowing nonprofits to contract through standard bidding processes.
- **Impact:** Jeopardizes funds that towns donate to local lake associations and NH LAKES for water quality management and restoration and invasive species management and prevention
- **NH LAKES Position:** **OPPOSED**
- **Hearing:** House Municipal and County Government (TBD)





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.

2026 Legislative Tracking

NH LAKES 2026 Bill Tracking Sheet

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,

This is the moment I've been waiting for—YOUR first opportunity to give your lake, and all our lakes, a voice during the 2026 New Hampshire Legislative Session!

This coming week, our lakes need YOU to stand up for SIX lake-friendly bills! These bills will help prevent harmful chemicals from contaminating our waters and provide critical funding to fight toxic cyanobacteria blooms.

Read to learn more, and then take action. Sign in online in support of these bills and share your story about why these initiatives are critical for restoring and preserving the health of your lake, and all of New Hampshire's lakes.

For an even greater impact, join me at the hearings. You do not need to testify in person—simply showing up in numbers makes a powerful statement. If you would like to testify, please contact me in advance so we can coordinate our talking points.

Advocacy is most effective when legislators hear directly from those who care the most. Whether or not you vote in New Hampshire, if you love one of our 1,000 lakes and ponds, our legislators want—and NEED—to hear from you.

Thank you for being a voice for New Hampshire's lakes,



Andrea LaMoreaux
President and Policy Advocate
alamoreaux@nhlakes.org

P.S: Please share this urgent call to action with your friends, neighbors, and family members who also love our lakes.

**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	
	3	4	5	6	7	8

Step 3. Select Bill
* Required fields

Select the Committee *

Choose the Bill *

I am *

I'm Representing *

Indicate Your Position on this Bill *

☐ I Support this Bill ☐ I 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!