

2025 Legislative Review

by Rob Johnson, NHFB Policy Director

The disposition of bills followed by Farm Bureau in the New Hampshire Legislature this year. At the end of a bill's number and a description in **bold print** is Farm Bureau's position (if we took one) on the bill.

Bills Signed into Law – not including State Budget bills HB 1 & HB 2 (for information on these bills see the *Friday Review* dated 6/27/25)

HB 86-FN-LOCAL, increasing the cost of service for notice of civil forfeiture of unlicensed dogs to the rate for certified mail. (RSA 466:14)

Effective: 7/7/25, Chapter Law 7.

HB 87-FN, prohibiting the posting of land not owned by the poster.

Adds specific language (***bold italics*** print below) to RSA 635:5, the penalty section for the Prescribed Manner of Posting statute (RSA 635:4), prohibiting the unauthorized posting of the property of another.

635:4 Prescribed Manner of Posting. – A person may post his land to prohibit criminal trespass and physical activities by posting signs of durable material with any words describing the physical activity prohibited, such as "No Hunting or Trespassing", printed with block letters no less than 2 inches in height, and with the name and address of the owner or lessee of such land. Such signs shall be posted not more than 100 yards apart on all sides and shall also be posted at gates, bars and commonly used entrances. This section shall not prevent any owner from adding to the language required by this section.

635:5 Penalty.

I. Any person who is found removing, defacing or destroying any sign, poster or property of another shall be guilty of a class B misdemeanor.

II. Any person who knowingly places a sign or poster prohibiting certain physical activity on the land pursuant to RSA 635:4 on any land for which the person knows that he or she has no legal right nor any reasonable basis for belief of having such a right, shall be guilty of a class B misdemeanor; except that notwithstanding RSA 651:2, the person shall be fined \$200 for a first offense or \$500 for a second or subsequent offense.

Effective: 1/1/26, Chapter Law 136. **Support**

HB 92, (New Title) requiring recusal of members of zoning boards of adjustment and planning boards in certain circumstances.

Requires individuals serving on both the planning board and zoning board of adjustment to recuse themselves from voting on matters previously decided by the other board on which they serve.

Effective: 8/22/25, Chapter Law 108.

HB 123, (Second New Title) defining pre-sequestration timber tax revenue, establishing a moratorium on carbon sequestration and establishing a commission to study the effects of carbon sequestration in New Hampshire forests upon state and local tax revenue, effective forest management, and the health of New Hampshire's logging industry.

"Pre-sequestration timber tax revenue" is defined in the Forest Conservation and Taxation statute (RSA 79) as:

“the average of the amounts any municipality received in timber tax revenue from the owner of a parcel of land for the 5 full tax years preceding the tax year in which the owner or the owner’s predecessor in interest entered into a legally binding commitment to enroll or register the timber on such land in a carbon sequestration program or to otherwise dedicate the timber on such land to carbon sequestration.”

Moratorium: establishes a moratorium beginning July 1, 2025 and concluding on the date the study commission (see directly below) submits its report – due 11/1/27 – in which no owner of standing timber in New Hampshire on a parcel of more than 500 acres may enter into or exercise a right or other arrangement “to commit any part of such timber or its annual growth to the sequestration of carbon emissions through enrollment or registration with a carbon credit offset program or otherwise.”

The duties of the 13-member **commission** are to study:

I. For existing agreements or other arrangements under which New Hampshire landowners have committed any standing timber on their property to the sequestration of carbon emissions through registration with a carbon credit offset registry or similar program, the length of such commitment and any restrictions on or disincentives against logging of such timber.

II. The state and local tax impact of committing New Hampshire forest tracts to carbon sequestration.

III. Whether the state’s current system of taxation fairly and proportionally taxes the transactions by which New Hampshire forest tracts are committed to carbon sequestration and the fair market value of those tracts.

IV. Whether other statutory provisions interfere with the power of cities and towns under RSA 79:5 to tax standing timber that has been committed to carbon sequestration.

V. Whether the purchasers of carbon credits generated by carbon sequestration in New Hampshire forests should be taxed by the state for the benefit those credits confer.

VI. The impact on sound forest management practices, including minimization of forest fire risk.

VII. The impact on New Hampshire’s logging industry.

VIII. The effect carbon sequestration has on the state and national timber industry and its competitiveness with the timber industries of other states and countries.

Also strikes existing RSA 79 and rewrites it as follows below:

79:5 General Tax; Credits in Certain Cases. – ~~Whenever it shall appear to the assessing officials that a town or city is unreasonably deprived of revenue because of the failure of an owner to cut standing wood or timber when it shall have arrived at the degree of maturity most suitable for its use, such standing wood or timber shall be taxed in the same manner as general property and be subject to the same rights of appeal, the intent being to prevent the holding of standing wood or timber indefinitely without the payment of any taxes. If such standing wood or timber is taxed under the provision of this section, such taxes shall be a credit against any yield tax later imposed.~~

79:5 General Tax; Credits in Certain Cases.

I. Whenever it shall appear to the assessing officials that a town or city is unreasonably deprived of revenue because of the failure of an owner to cut standing wood or timber when it shall have arrived at the degree of maturity most suitable for its use, such standing wood or timber shall be taxed in the same manner as general property and be subject to the same rights of appeal, the intent being to prevent the holding of standing wood or timber indefinitely without the payment of any taxes. If such standing wood or timber is taxed under the provision of this section, such taxes shall be a credit against any yield tax later imposed.

II. As an alternative to the imposition of the tax provided for in paragraph I, in any tax year the owner may make a payment in lieu of taxes to the town or city equal to the difference between the pre-sequestration timber tax revenue and the actual timber tax paid by the landowner in that year. For any tax

year for which the owner elects to make a payment in lieu of taxes under this paragraph, the owner shall notify the town or city in writing of the owner's election on or before December 31 preceding such tax year.

Effective: 7/1/25, Chapter Law 164. ***Farm Bureau**, closely monitored the bill but did not take a position. We did strongly oppose a non-germane amendment to it that would have prohibited any land placed in a trust that had received any public funds from being enrolled in a carbon sequestration program. This amendment was defeated.

HB 124, (New Title) enabling a municipal forest committee or conservation commission to offer surplus money to the municipality for deposit in the municipal unreserved fund balance. (RSA 31:113)

Effective: 9/13/25, Chapter Law 165.

HB 150, enabling homestead operations to use commercial kitchen equipment in preparing food for sale. Clarifies Homestead Food Operations may use commercial equipment by adding language in **bold italics** print to the definition of Homestead Food Operation in RSA 143-A:12 as follows:

I(a) "Homestead food operation" means a person who produces homestead food products, excluding potentially hazardous food, only in the home kitchen of that person's primary residence in New Hampshire. ***A homestead food operation may use commercial kitchen equipment so long as the equipment is able to be cleaned and sanitized in the processing area. For purposes of this subparagraph, "commercial kitchen equipment" means the specialized tools and appliances used in professional kitchens to prepare, cook, and store food and that can withstand heavy use and high-volume cooking.***

Effective: 7/13/25, Chapter Law 18. **Support**

HB 153-FN, (New Title) establishing a committee to study adding statewide resources to assist with the investigation, training, prosecution, and prompt response of animal cruelty.

The duties of the study committee are outlined as follows:

- I. Examine existing training provided by the New Hampshire police standards and training council and other courses that may be available either in-state or out-of-state.*
- II. Identify the best way to train law enforcement and other stakeholders including prosecutors.*
- III. Identify the best way to form a group to be a resource for others in New Hampshire.*
- IV. Recognize that having a group to assist with promptness of calls will be in the best interest of animals in distress.*
- V. Work with all agencies involved in the mission.*
- VI. Identify any other issues that may be needed to fulfill the intent of this committee.*

A final report containing committee findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation is due on or before November 1, 2025. Members of the study committee: Rep. Barbara Comtois (Center Barnstead), Rep. Judy Aron (South Acworth), Peter Bixby (Dover), & Sen. Howard Pearl (Loudon).

The bill was introduced as requiring state police and the county sheriffs ensure that at least one trooper and one deputy sheriff in each county be trained in animal cruelty investigations and be available to assist local law enforcement agencies with such investigations.

Effective: 5/8/25, Chapter Law 8. **Support**

HB 193, relative to the maximum number of credits per course eligible for the dual and concurrent enrollment program.

Specifies that courses funded by the state under the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment Program shall not exceed 4 credits each.

Effective: 5/18/25, Chapter Law 10

HB 267, relative to animal chiropractors.

Amends the NH Veterinary Practice Act (RSA 332-B) to enable non-licensed individuals who hold a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) or a Doctor of Chiropractic Degree (DC) and who have completed a nationally recognized animal chiropractic program as determined by the Executive Director of the NH Office of Professional Licensure and Certification, to practice chiropractor on animals.

Effective: 7/13/25, Chapter Law 24.

HB 272, exempting certain agricultural practices from municipal noise regulation.

Clarifies language passed into law in 2023 (HB 252), exempting agricultural operations (except for agritourism activities) from municipal noise ordinances. It does this by striking the words “quiet hours,” which could be used to override the intent of the law passed in 2023 as follows:

Powers and Duties of Towns; Power to Make Bylaws. Amend RSA 31:39, I(n) to read as follows:
(n) Regulating noise, except that no [~~“quiet hours”~~] ordinance or bylaw that attempts to regulate noise from activities related to farms, agriculture, and farming as defined in RSA 21:34-a shall be enforceable within a town. This exception shall not apply to agritourism as defined in RSA 21:34-a, II(b)(5).

Powers of City Councils; Bylaws and Ordinances. Amend RSA 47:17, XX to read as follows:
XX. No [~~“quiet hours”~~] ordinance or bylaw that attempts to regulate noise from activities related to farms, agriculture, and farming as defined in RSA 21:34-a shall be enforceable within a city. This exception shall not apply to agritourism as defined in RSA 21:34-a, II(b)(5).

Effective: 8/1/25, Chapter Law 61. **Support**

HB 277, relative to the use of the term “foal” and “colt.”

Updates and clarifies language in the animal cruelty statute relative to juvenile equines by amending RSA 644:8, III, (f) and (g) by striking language and adding language in ***bold italics*** print as follows:

III. A person is guilty of a misdemeanor for a first offense, and of a class B felony for a second or subsequent offense, who:

- (f) Has in his or her possession an equine [~~colt~~] ***foal*** that is less than 90 days old that is not being nursed by its dam, unless [~~the colt was born in this state, and~~] its dam has died [~~within this state~~] before the [~~colt became~~] ***foal has turned*** 90 days old;
- (g) Sells an equine [~~colt~~] ***foal*** that is less than 90 days old that [~~is not being nursed by~~] ***has been separated from*** its dam; or

Effective: 7/13/25, Chapter Law 27. **Support**

HB 279, establishing a committee to study recipe and process approval for homestead foods.

Establishes a committee to study recipe and process approval for homestead foods under the Homestead Food licensing statute (RSA 143-A: 12&13). The duties of the committee are outlined to study the following:

- I. Current requirements under statute and rules for determining what recipes and processes are approved for production and sale by non-exempt homestead food producers.*
- II. Current procedures for allowing alterations to recipes, what alterations are allowable without process review, and what alterations require process review.*
- III. Potential amendments to statute that would provide a balance between flexibility for producers and protection of consumers.*

Findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation are due on or before November 1, 2025.

Effective: 5/29/25, Chapter Law 44. **Support**

HB 296, relative to issuing building permits along private roads.

Provides an alternative pathway for local governing bodies to authorize buildings on private roads. Also removes local Zoning Board of Adjustment discretion for determining when to take up an appeal (currently “a reasonable time as provided by the rules of the board”) and replaces it to within 30-days of the filing of an appeal.

Effective: 9/13/25, Chapter Law 175.

HB 304, relative to labeling requirements for food produced in homestead kitchens.

Updates and changes labeling requirements for food produced in Homestead Food operations. This includes addressing concerns about privacy by allowing home-based producers to use an e-mail address instead of their physical address on package labels. It also addresses logistical issues and frequently changing ingredient labels where seasonal ingredients are being used by allowing a Quick Response (QR) code that can be scanned or website provided to access a site where ingredients are listed. Allergy information would still need to be provided. Products made by Homestead Food operations exempt from licensure need to be clearly labeled with the statement: "This product is exempt from New Hampshire licensing and inspection" and products made by nonexempt Homestead Food operations need to be clearly labeled with the statement: "This product is made in a residential food production area licensed by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services."

Effective: 7/13/25, Chapter Law: 46. **Support**

HB 307, relative to the food production area for homestead food.

Current statute requires Homestead Food be produced only in the kitchen of a residence. For some producers, having a separate production area where they can produce food in a separate space, out of family members, pets, etc. is more practical. The bill amends the Homestead Food License law by striking language and adding language in ***bold italics*** to permit the use of such an area and spells out necessary sanitation and food safety requirements for the production space as follows:

(Text of HB 150 incorporated)

RSA143-A:12, I (a) "Homestead food operation" means a person who produces homestead food products, excluding potentially hazardous food, only in the home kitchen of that person's primary residence in New Hampshire ***or a food production area in the person's primary residence that has handwashing, equipment and food storage, food contact surfaces, general sanitation, and pet exclusion areas.***

(1) As used in this subparagraph:

(A) *"Handwashing" means an area with access to a hand cleaning station with hot and cold running potable water, soap, and sanitary hand drying provisions.*

(B) *"Equipment and food storage" means an area that allows for food, equipment, and utensils to be stored in a manner that prevents contamination.*

(C) *"Food contact surfaces" means all food contact surfaces in an area able to be cleaned and sanitized.*

(D) *"General sanitation" means an area maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, free from pests and environmental contaminants, whose floors, walls, and ceiling surfaces are durable, smooth and easily cleanable.*

(E) *"Pet exclusion" means an area that allows for the exclusion of pets during food production.*

(2) *A homestead food operation may use commercial kitchen equipment so long as the equipment is able to be cleaned and sanitized in the processing area. For purposes of this subparagraph, "commercial kitchen equipment" means the specialized tools and appliances used in professional kitchens to prepare, cook, and store food and that can withstand heavy use and high-volume cooking.*

(Text of HB 304 incorporated)

RSA 143-A:12, IV(c)(2) Products made by nonexempt homestead food operations shall also be clearly labeled with the following statement: "This product is made in a residential [kitchen] food production area licensed by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services."

Effective: 7/28/25, Chapter Law 46. **Support**

HB 354-FN, relative to alternate certification pathways for career and technical education instructors.

Permits the state Board of Education to issue a certificate of eligibility to individuals interested in becoming a career and technical instructor in an identified specialty area. Individuals need to have three years of full-time professional paid experience and industry-recognized credentials in the career and technical education area a license is sought.

Effective: 8/30/25, Chapter Law 147. **Support**

HB 371, relative to the definition of occasional food service establishment.

Expands the definition of "Occasional Food Service Establishment" in the Food Service Licensure statutes (RSA 143-A) by striking language and adding language in ***bold italics*** as follows:

"Occasional food service establishment" means any food service establishment where food is [served or] provided for the public <i>and served on premises or taken away and consumed off premises</i> [on the premises of the establishment] , whether or not there is a charge for such food, no more than 4 days during a [30] <i>28</i> -day period. Any part of a day shall be considered one full day for the purposes of this definition.

Effective: 7/28/25, Chapter Law 48. **Support**

HB 399, (New Title) establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act and relative to the effective date of the C-PACER program. *

Establishes a commission to study the historical evolution of RSA 674:16, granting zoning authority to New Hampshire municipalities. The intent is to study the evolution of the law, how it has been changed over the years, and to consider and make recommendations for future legislation on the balance of zoning powers between the state and municipalities. The duties of the commission are detailed as follows:

- (a) Study the policy problem that the drafters of the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act intended to solve with the “Grant of Power” section, as enacted by the New Hampshire legislature in RSA 674:16.*
- (b) Determine if that problem or those problems are still relevant today, whether in whole or in part.*
- (c) Evaluate if RSA 674:16 has been effective in resolving that problem or problems.*
- (d) Examine whether the regulatory powers granted by RSA 674:16 were intended to be plenary or limited to those stated.*
- (e) Assess how those powers have been construed by courts and by local legislators over the years.*
- (f) Determine if the listed powers are still appropriate and/or applicable today, and if any could be removed or if any not present should be added.*
- (g) Similarly, assess if the listed purposes in RSA 674:17 are still appropriate or applicable today, and if any could be removed or if any not present should be added.*
- (h) Identify legislative alternatives to the approach taken by the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, including any adopted by other states, and consider RSA 674:25, an enabling act for adopting interim zoning ordinances.*
- (i) Identify elements of the other sections of the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, as codified at RSA 674:16-23, that would benefit from examination and potential revision.*
- (j) Investigate the relationship between the zoning provisions of RSA 674:16 et seq. and the subdivision provisions of RSA 674:35 et seq., and explore opportunities for aligning or combining these provisions.*

An interim report containing findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation is due on or before November 1, 2025 with a final report due on or before November 1, 2026.

Existing RSA 674:16:

674:16 Grant of Power. –

I. For the purpose of promoting the health, safety, or the general welfare of the community, the local legislative body of any city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places is authorized to adopt or amend a zoning ordinance under the ordinance enactment procedures of RSA 675:2-5. The zoning ordinance shall be designed to regulate and restrict:

- (a) The height, number of stories and size of buildings and other structures;*
- (b) Lot sizes, the percentage of a lot that may be occupied, and the size of yards, courts and other open spaces;*
- (c) The density of population in the municipality; and*
- (d) The location and use of buildings, structures and land used for business, industrial, residential, or other purposes.*

II. The power to adopt a zoning ordinance under this subdivision expressly includes the power to adopt innovative land use controls which may include, but which are not limited to, the methods contained in RSA 674:21.

III. In its exercise of the powers granted under this subdivision, the local legislative body of a city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places may regulate and control the timing of development as provided in RSA 674:22.

IV. Except as provided in RSA 424:5 or RSA 422-B or in any other provision of Title XXXIX, no city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places shall adopt or amend a zoning ordinance or regulation with respect to antennas used exclusively in the amateur radio services that fails to conform to the limited federal preemption entitled Amateur Radio Preemption, 101 FCC 2nd 952 (1985) issued by the Federal Communications Commission.

V. In its exercise of the powers granted under this subdivision, the local legislative body of a city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places may regulate and control accessory uses on private land. Unless specifically proscribed by local land use regulation, aircraft take offs and landings on private land by the owner of such land or by a person who resides on such land shall be considered a valid and permitted accessory use.

VI. In its exercise of the powers granted under this subdivision, the local legislative body of a city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places shall, as described in RSA 672:1, V-a, allow home-based care (family care and group family care) by right or pursuant to a conditional use permit as long as all requirements for such programs adopted in rules of the department of health and human services (He-C 4002) are met. Family or group family child care shall be allowed as an accessory use to any primary residential use and shall not be subject to local site plan review in any zone where a primary residential use is permitted. If all requirements of the department of health and human services are met, but an application for a conditional use permit is pending with the municipality in which the home-based child care facility is located, an applicant may begin operation during such time until the permit is granted or denied.

VII. In its exercise of the powers granted under this subdivision, the local legislative body of a city, town, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places may regulate accessory parking for vehicles, but shall not require more than 1.5 residential parking spaces per unit for studio and one bedroom units under 1000 square feet that meet the requirements for workforce housing under RSA 674:58, IV, and shall not require more than 1.5 residential parking spaces per unit for multi-family developments of 10 units or more.

* C-PACER stands for “Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy or Resiliency and has been incorporated into RSA 53-F, which enables municipalities to establish Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy Districts. HB 399 changed the effective date of SB 4, which amends RSA 53-F with the C-PACER program.

Effective: 7/1/25, Chapter Law 2.

HB 457, (Second New Title) relative to zoning restrictions on dwelling units.

Adds language to the state’s Planning and Zoning statute prohibiting any local legislative body from restricting the number of occupants of any dwelling unit to less than 2 occupants per bedroom or basing restrictions on familial or non-familial relationships, marital status, occupation, employment status, educational status, or academic achievement as follows:

RSA 674:16, VIII. In its exercise of the powers granted under this subdivision, the legislative body of a city, town, village district, or county in which there are located unincorporated towns or unorganized places shall not adopt any ordinance that restricts the number of occupants of any dwelling unit to less than 2 occupants per bedroom, and the governing body thereof shall not enforce any such ordinance. Such legislative body shall not adopt any ordinance based on the familial or non-familial relationships or marital status, occupation, employment status, or the educational status, including but not limited to scholastic enrollment or academic achievement at any level among the occupants of the dwelling unit, including but not limited to college students, and the governing body thereof shall not enforce any such ordinance. Nothing in this section shall prohibit the enforcement of the state building code or state fire code.

Effective: 9/13/25, Chapter Law 188.

HB 504, relative to the state energy policy.

Adds language (***bold italics*** print below) to statute outlining the state’s energy policy promoting affordable, reliable, and diverse energy sources with a goal of ensuring the state’s energy independence.

RSA 378:37 New Hampshire Energy Policy. – The general court declares that it shall be the energy policy of this state to meet the energy needs of the citizens and businesses of the state at the lowest reasonable cost while providing for the reliability and diversity of energy sources; to maximize the use of

cost effective energy efficiency and other demand side resources; and to protect the safety and health of the citizens, the physical environment of the state, and the future supplies of resources, with consideration of the financial stability of the state's utilities. ***It is the policy of the sovereign state of New Hampshire and purpose of this chapter to use market and regulatory mechanisms to promote affordable, reliable, diverse, and secure energy resources for the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens and its physical environment.***

I. New Hampshire shall promote the development of resources to achieve the purpose of this chapter, fostering a range of technology types, including reliable, on-demand, diverse, and firm energy resources, and distributed energy sources and storage capacities consistent with these goals, while allowing for customer choice.

II. New Hampshire shall promote the development of resources, tools, and infrastructure to enhance the state's ability to ensure the state's energy independence by removing regulatory barriers to innovation to ensure that the state can procure affordable, reliable, diverse, and secure energy resources, including energy generation combined with storage, and consistent with RSA 362-F.

III. New Hampshire shall allow market forces and market-based mechanisms to drive prudent use of energy resources. Government intervention to economically advantage one technology over another shall be time-limited, narrow, or necessary to achieve a specific policy goal.

IV. New Hampshire shall pursue energy conservation and efficiency according to market principles in order to address market barriers, as regulated by policies for the public good and public health, and focus on market transformation in accordance with cost-effective fiscal strategies as authorized by the legislature, and consistent with RSA 374-F.

V. New Hampshire shall maintain an environment that allows for accurate market signals while balancing affordable consumer prices, price stability, energy reliability, public health and safety, and the financial stability of utilities and energy suppliers.

VI. State regulatory processes shall balance economic costs with the level of review necessary to ensure protection of the state's various interests, and where federal action is required, New Hampshire will collaborate to encourage expedited federal review and action.

Effective: 9/13/25, Chapter Law 192. **Support**

HB 505-FN, allowing the sale of freeze dried foods produced in homestead food operations.

Amends the Homestead Food statute to enable the sale of freeze-dried foods by adding the following language:

RSA 143-A:12, IV. *Homestead food operations processing and selling freeze dried foods, from the homestead residence, at the owner's own farm stand, at farmers' markets, or at retail food stores shall be licensed under RSA 143-A:4. For the purposes of this section, freeze dried foods means fruits, vegetables, and commercially prepared dairy products.*

Effective: 11/12/25, Chapter Law 193. **Support**

HB 631-FN, (New Title) permitting residential building in commercial zoning.

Requires municipalities to permit multi-family residential development on commercially zoned land, provided adequate infrastructure is available. Also requires provisions for adaptive reuse of commercial space for multi-family or mixed-use.

Effective: 7/1/26, Chapter Law 201.

HB 655-FN, (New Title) relative to fish and game violations, permits, and licenses.

Increases restitution to the state for the illegal taking or possession of certain game animals and makes restitution mandatory. This includes increased restitution for illegal take of each deer from \$250 to \$1,000, and each wild turkey from \$250 to \$500. Allows for hunting license suspension for a third

violation of a Fish and Game law or regulation. Establishes a Class A misdemeanor penalty for a third-offense violation of Fish and Game offense (within a 7-year period) that carries a license suspension penalty. Removes the requirement that a crossbow permit issued for certain persons with a disability be perpetual. Adds Atlantic menhaden to the list of species nonresidents may not take unless the state in which such person is a resident provides a reciprocal licensing privilege for residents of New Hampshire.

Effective: 7/15/25 – 9/13/25, Chapter Law 202. **Support**

HB 670-FN, (New Title) *adjusting the minimum fine for attacks by nuisance dogs.*

Amends penalties for attacks by nuisance dogs in RSA 466:31-a. Includes replacing a \$25 fine for a first offense (section II (a), (b), (c), (d) below) with a warning, replacing a \$100 fine for a second offense with a \$50 fine within a 12-month period and applying a \$100 fine for third or subsequent nuisance offense, increasing the fine for a first menace offense (section II(e) & (f) below) from \$50 to \$200, and increasing the fine for a first vicious offense (section II(g) below) from \$100 to \$400 and adding language requiring that the dog owner is responsible for all medical bills sustained by the person attacked. The fine for a second and subsequent vicious attack is increased from \$400 to \$1,000.

466:31 Dogs a Menace, a Nuisance or Vicious. –

I. [Repealed.]

II. Under this section, a dog is considered to be a nuisance, a menace, or vicious to persons or to property under any or all but not limited to the following conditions:

(a) If a dog is "at large," which means it is off the premises of the owner or keeper and not under the control of any person by means of personal presence and attention as will reasonably control the conduct of such dog, unless accompanied by the owner or custodian. This subparagraph shall not include a dog which is being used for hunting, supervised competition, exhibition, or training for such activities if accompanied by the owner or custodian, or a dog which is guarding, working, or herding livestock, as defined in RSA 21: 34-a, II(a)(4), meaning that the owner or custodian must be able to see or hear the dog, or have reasonable knowledge of where the dog is hunting or herding, or where training is being conducted or where trials are being held, provided that such dog does not have to be within sight at all time;

(b) If it barks for sustained periods of more than 1/2 hour, or during the night hours so as to disturb the peace and quiet of a neighborhood or area, not including a dog which is guarding, working, or herding livestock, as defined in RSA 21:34-a, II(a)(4);

(c) If it digs, scratches, or excretes, or causes waste or garbage to be scattered on property other than its owner's;

(d) If any female dog in season (heat) is permitted to run at large or be off the premises of the owner or keeper during this period except when being exercised on a leash by a responsible adult. At all other times such dog shall be confined within a building or enclosure in such manner that she will not come in contact (except for intentional breeding purposes) with a male dog. A female dog in heat shall not be used for hunting;

(e) If it growls, snaps at, runs after, or chases any person or persons not on the premises of the owner or keeper;

(f) If it runs after, or chases bicycles, motor vehicles, motorcycles, or other vehicles being driven, pulled or pushed on the streets, highways, or public ways;

(g) If, whether alone or in a pack with other dogs, it bites, attacks, or preys on game animals, domestic animals, fowl or human beings.

II-a. If the skin of a person has been punctured by a dog and the incident was reported, including the identity of the dog and its owner, to the animal officer, if any, or to the town clerk, such officer or clerk shall, within 24 hours, notify the injured person, or, in the case of a minor, the minor's parent or guardian, whether, according to town records, the dog has been appropriately immunized against rabies.

III. (a) Any person who fails, by appropriate action including but not limited to restraining an animal

from running at large, or otherwise effectively abating a nuisance found such under the provisions of this section, or who fails to comply with any other provisions of this section after being so ordered, shall have the person's dog taken into custody by the police of the city, constable of the town, or other person authorized by the town and such disposition made of the dog as the court may order.

(b) Notwithstanding RSA 466:31-a, if a law enforcement officer does not witness the nuisance behavior, the name of the complainant shall be released as public information before any fine under RSA 466:31-a shall be levied.

Effective: 1/1/26, Chapter Law 203.

HB 690-FN, directing the department of energy to investigate the state's withdrawal from ISO-New England and other strategy decisions that impact ratepayers in relation to New England's environmental policy.

Directs the state's Department of Energy to conduct an investigation into the state's potential withdrawal from ISO New England (Independent System Operator of New England) and other strategies to assure that New Hampshire ratepayers do not pay for public policy initiatives of other New England states, including environmental policies, in a manner that is unjust and unreasonable. ISO New England is the organization responsible for operating the regions electric grid, administering wholesale energy markets, and for planning the power system needs in the region. The Department is directed to answer the following questions:

- (a) What are the current rights and obligations of ISO New England? Which responsibilities, currently held by ISO New England, could New Hampshire meet on its own through state agencies, utilities, or otherwise?*
- (b) Have other states, or utilities in other states, or both, left or considered leaving ISO New England or any other regional transmission organization? What has been the result of such initiatives?*
- (c) What new capabilities would state government and/or utilities need to develop if New Hampshire were no longer participating in ISO New England?*
- (d) What are the costs and benefits to New Hampshire of leaving ISO New England? Would the state and its electric ratepayers suffer economically inefficient outcomes as a result, including exit fees, duplication of investments or costs, or operational redundancies?*
- (e) What effect would exiting ISO New England have on the reliability of the bulk power transmission system serving New Hampshire?*
- (f) What are the benefits to New Hampshire of continued participation in ISO New England? What opportunities exist to improve such outcomes should New Hampshire continue to participate in ISO New England?*
- (g) What impediments to ISO New England withdrawal exist as the result of federal law, state law, or other legal obligations?*
- (h) How can a regional wholesale electricity market balance differing state policy goals while ensuring just and reasonable outcomes for New Hampshire utility customers?*
- (i) What changes to existing ISO New England tariffs would be necessary in order to allow New Hampshire to withdraw from ISO New England?*
- (j) What obligations would New Hampshire, and entities operating in New Hampshire, incur under the Federal Power Act if New Hampshire were to withdraw from ISO New England?*
- (k) What alternative regulatory structures, beyond reliance on a regional transmission organization like ISO New England, should New Hampshire consider to assure that New Hampshire electric customers receive safe and reliable service at the lowest possible cost?*
- (l) Is the governance of ISO New England, including its board of directors as well as its stakeholder advisory body NEPOOL, sufficiently accountable to the public and adequate to assure that ISO New England is operated in the public interest?*

- (m) *When operating independently of ISO-New England, what restrictions would be placed on the state by the Federal Power Act or principles of federalism? What powers are beyond the state's purview?*
- (n) *What alternative regulatory structures could the state explore that would better allow it to serve reliable, affordable electricity to its citizens?*

A report of answers is due to the House Science Technology and Energy Committee and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee by 7/15/26.

Effective: 7/15/25, Chapter Law 205.

HB 779-FN, allowing the sale of rabbit meat in intrastate commerce.

Current NH law allows for the sale of up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits each year raised on a NH farm to restaurants in NH. This bill expands rabbit meat sales to allow also up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits to be sold from a rabbit producers farm, farmstand, or farmers' market stand. Rabbits are considered a non-amenable species under federal meat inspection law and therefore do not require US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection. The USDA does require meat sales be consistent with state food safety laws. The bill puts rabbit meat sales on par to uninspected poultry meat sales by adding the language in ***bold italics*** print to existing law as follows:

RSA 143-A:16 Producer Requirements.

I. A federally exempt poultry producer may, in a calendar year, sell to licensed restaurants uninspected, processed whole poultry that the producer has raised in a quantity not to exceed the federal limit established in 21 U.S.C. section 464 and an unlicensed rabbit producer may, in a calendar year, sell to licensed restaurants up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits that the producer has raised, provided all of the following conditions are met:

(a) The producer is current with all educational requirements that are established by the commissioner in consultation with the commissioner of agriculture, markets, and food relative to proper methods of slaughtering, processing, packaging, and storing poultry or rabbit on the farm and its subsequent transport to restaurants; and

(b) The producer has registered with the department of agriculture, markets, and food by providing his or her name, the name and address of the farm, and phone number, to allow for trace back in the event of disease outbreak. Such registry information shall be protected pursuant to RSA 436:6-a.

II. ***An unlicensed rabbit producer may, in a calendar year, sell at his or her own farm, farmstand, or farmer's market up to 1,000 uninspected, processed whole rabbits that the producer has raised provided all of the following conditions are met:***

(a) The rabbits are raised, slaughtered, processed, packaged, and sold within the state of New Hampshire;

(b) The producer has fulfilled all educational requirements that are established by the commissioner of the department of health and human services in consultation with the commissioner of the department of agriculture, markets, and food relative to proper methods of slaughtering, processing, packaging, and storing rabbit on the farm and its subsequent transport to farmstands or farmers markets; and

(c) The producer has registered with the department of agriculture, markets, and food by providing his or her name, the name and the address of the farm, and his or her phone number, to allow for trace back in the event of disease outbreak. Such information shall be protected pursuant to RSA 436:6-a.

III. The department may inspect these exempt products when the department has reason to suspect an imminent health hazard as defined in RSA 143-A:3, IV-b.

Effective: 7/29/25, Chapter Law 54 **Support**

SB 50, establishing a committee to study the regulation of private animal boarding facilities.

The purpose of the study committee is to study dog boarding facilities. Its duties are outlined as follows:

I. Review current laws and regulations pertaining to private animal boarding facilities;

II. Identify how facilities are licensed and how incidents are reported when an animal has been harmed, lost, or killed in their care;

III. Identify gaps, if any, that may exist in current rules and regulations; and

IV. Solicit testimony from any person or organization with relevant information or expertise.

A report of the committee's findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation is due on or before November 1, 2025.

Effective: 6/10/25, Chapter Law 83.

SB 99-FN, relative to regional career and technical education agreements.

Extends access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) and requires regional CTE agreements to include an access program for full and part-time students. (RSA 188-E)

Effective: 7/1/25, Chapter Law 229.

SB 110-FN, relative to terrain permitting.

Increases the square footage landowners are exempted from Alteration of Terrain (AoT) permitting from 100,000 square feet to 150,000 square feet, increases fees for AoT permitting, requires the Department of Environmental Services to adopt rules to establish a Permit by Notification for projects with plans encompassing an area less than 150,000 square feet, and increases permit fees. It does this by amending existing statute by striking language and adding language in ***bold italics*** as follows:

RSA 485-A:17 Terrain Alteration. -

I. Any person proposing to dredge, excavate, place fill, mine, transport forest products or undertake construction in or on the border of the surface waters of the state, and any person proposing to significantly alter the characteristics of the terrain, in such a manner as to impede the natural runoff or create an unnatural runoff, shall be directly responsible to submit to the department detailed plans concerning such proposal and any additional relevant information requested by the department, at least 30 days prior to undertaking any such activity. The operations shall not be undertaken unless and until the applicant receives a permit from the department. The department shall have full authority to establish the terms and conditions under which any permit issued may be exercised, giving due consideration to the circumstances involved and the purposes of this chapter, and to adopt such rules as are reasonably related to the efficient administration of this section, and the purposes of this chapter. Nothing contained in this paragraph shall be construed to modify or limit the duties and authority conferred upon the department under RSA 482 and RSA 482-A.

*II.(a) The department shall charge a fee for ~~[each review of plans]~~ **applications**, including project inspections, required under this section. ~~[The plan review fee shall be based on the total area to be disturbed.]~~ **For projects that qualify for a permit by notification allowed by paragraph II-a, the application fee for a permit by notification shall be \$3,125.** Except for ~~[property subject to RSA 483-B:9]~~ **projects that qualify for a permit by notification allowed by paragraph II-a**, the fee for ~~[review of plans]~~ **applications** encompassing an area of at least ~~[100,000]~~ **150,000** square feet but less than 200,000 square feet shall be ~~[\$3,125]~~ **\$6,250.** ~~[For the property subject to RSA 483-B:9, the fee for review of plans encompassing an area of at least 50,000 square feet but less than 200,000 square feet shall be \$3,125.]~~ An additional fee of ~~[\$1,250]~~ **\$2,500** shall be assessed for each additional area of up to 100,000 square feet to be disturbed. **For any property subject to RSA 483-B:9, the fee for review of plans encompassing an area of at least 50,000 square feet but less than 150,000 square feet shall be \$5,000. For all other***

projects, the fee shall be \$500 plus \$0.005 per square foot of disturbance. No application shall be accepted by the department until the fee required by this paragraph is paid. All fees required under this paragraph shall be paid when plans are submitted for review and shall be deposited in the water resources fund established in RSA 482-A:3, III.

(b) The department shall charge a non-refundable fee of \$500 [~~plus a \$0.10 fee per square foot of disturbance associated with the amendment request~~] for each request to amend a permit that requires plans to be reviewed.

Permit by Notification.

The Department of Environmental Services is required to adopt rules by 1/1/26 to establish a permit by notification for projects with plans encompassing an area less than 150,000 square feet (those not subject to the Shoreland Protection Act, RSA 483-B:9).

Note: the language of SB 110 was also contained in the State Budget HB 2.

Effective: 9/13/25, Chapter Law 231. **Support**

SB 188-FN, (New Title) relative to the state building code.

Titled the "Speeding Development Act," authorizes licensed or certified third parties to certify documents and inspect buildings in compliance with applicable building and other codes.

Effective: 7/15/25, Chapter Law 246. **Support**

SB 229, relative to the sale of uninspected bison, red deer, and elk meat.

Expands the ability to sell uninspected bison, red deer, and elk meat to any retailer (existing statute enabled sales from licensed restaurants) if properly labeled and purchased directly from the producer. Also removes the scheduled repeal of the law enabling sales to restaurants. The amended new section of law reads as follows (followed by the previous law):

143-A:20-a Purchase of Uninspected Bison, Elk, or Red Deer by Retailers.

I. A retailer may purchase from bison, elk, or red deer producers uninspected bison, elk, or red deer that is labeled in accordance with RSA 143-A:19 for resale.

II. For at least 90 days from the date of each purchase, the retailer shall keep on file the receipt of purchase to include the product purchased, the date of purchase, the name of the producer, the name and address of the farm, and phone number.

III. The retailer shall clearly label any product containing uninspected bison, elk, or red deer with the following statement: "This product was slaughtered at the farm and is exempt from state and federal inspection."

92:2 2025 Prospective Repeal. Amend 2023, 180:11, I to read as follows:

I. Sections 7-10 of this act shall ***not*** take effect [~~July 1, 2025~~].

92:3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect June 30, 2025.

Law effective until July 1, 2025:

~~143-A:20 Purchase of Uninspected Bison, Elk, or Red Deer by Licensed Restaurants.~~

~~I. A licensed restaurant, as defined in RSA 143-A:14, II, may purchase from bison, elk, or red deer producers uninspected bison, elk or red deer that is labeled in accordance with RSA 143-A:19.~~

~~II. For at least 90 days from the date of each purchase, the licensed restaurant shall keep on file the receipt of purchase to include the product purchased, the date of purchase, the name of the producer, the name and address of the farm, and phone number.~~

~~III. The licensed restaurant shall clearly label any menu item containing uninspected bison, elk, or red deer with the following statement: "This product was slaughtered at the farm and is exempt from state and federal inspection."~~

Effective: 6/30/25, Chapter Law 92. **Support**

SB 233-FN, (New Title) relative to the grid modernization advisory group.

Provides additional recommendations for consideration by the Grid Modernization Advisory Group (RSA 12-P:16, II(a)) by inserting after (4) as follows:

- (5) The current and growing electricity reliability challenges in the New Hampshire and New England markets.*
- (6) The role of energy storage in addressing short-term and long-term reliability challenges.*
- (7) Market-based solutions to incentivize the development and connection of large-scale energy storage systems designed to enhance reliability.*
- (8) The use of an indexing storage credit model to incentivize storage market development.*

The advisory group reports annually on November 1st to the Governor and Legislature.

Effective: 6/17/25, Chapter Law 103.

SB 235, (New Title) enabling funds from the Pitman-Robertson Act to be spent by the fish and game department on threatened and endangered species in New Hampshire and allowing the fish and game department to collect donations at sites approved by the executive director.

Effective: 8/23/25, Chapter Law 132.

SB 281, prohibiting municipalities from denying building or occupancy permits for property adjacent to class VI roads under certain circumstances.

Amends statute relative to allowing building on Class VI roads by amending RSA 674:41 Erection of Buildings on Streets; Appeals, in the state's Planning and Zoning laws, by amending section I(c) relative to building on Class VI roads as follows:

RSA 674:41, I(c) enabling building on Class VI roads is struck and reenacted as follows:

- (c) Is a class VI highway, provided that the applicant:*
- (1) Signs a liability waiver acknowledging that the:*
- (A) Municipality shall not maintain the highway nor provide any services to any lot accessible by the highway;*
- (B) Municipality shall not accept any responsibility for losses or damages caused by a lack of services; and*
- (C) Responsibility for such services falls solely on the applicant; and*
- (2) Prior to the issuance of a building permit, produces evidence that this waiver has been recorded in the county register of deeds; and*
- (3) Prior to the issuance of a building permit, proves the lot and any buildings thereon are insurable; or*

Existing RSA 674:41, I(c) being struck:

(c) Is a class VI highway, provided that:

~~(1) The local governing body after review and comment by the planning board has voted to authorize the issuance of building permits for the erection of buildings on said class VI highway or a portion thereof; and~~

- ~~(2) The municipality neither assumes responsibility for maintenance of said class VI highway nor liability for any damages resulting from the use thereof; and~~
~~(3) Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall produce evidence that notice of the limits of municipal responsibility and liability has been recorded in the county registry of deeds; or~~

Effective: 7/1/26, Chapter Law 256.

House Resolutions Adopted

HR 10, (New Title) recognizing the importance of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment with regard to our fundamental rights.

Recognizes the importance of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment with regard to our fundamental rights as follows:

A **RESOLUTION** recognizing the importance of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment with regard to our fundamental rights.

Whereas, a clean and healthy environment is important to and impacts human health; and

Whereas, without good health, our ability to enjoy our fundamental rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is diminished; and; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the house of representatives: we recognize and highly value clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment and we support goals and policies that will promote those values.

Let it be further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to members of the New Hampshire congressional delegation, the president of the New Hampshire senate, and the speaker of the New Hampshire house of representatives.

Adopted by the NH House on 3/6/25.

HR 18, (New Title) urging the New Hampshire congressional delegation to sponsor legislation relative to, and urging the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to adopt regulations, allowing for small scale and very small slaughter plants to use the Federal Meat Inspection Act's Custom Exempt meat processing inspection criteria with a third-party inspector present at slaughter, so that processed beef, pork, lamb, and chevron (goat meat) can be sold as individual cuts directly from the farm producer to the end consumer.

A **RESOLUTION** urging the New Hampshire congressional delegation to sponsor legislation relative to, and urging the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to adopt regulations, allowing for small scale and very small slaughter plants to use the Federal Meat Inspection Act's Custom Exempt meat processing inspection criteria with a third-party inspector present at slaughter, so that processed beef, pork, lamb, and chevron (goat meat) can be sold as individual cuts directly from the farm producer to the end consumer.

Whereas, New Hampshire has only 4 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved slaughter plants; and

Whereas, to ensure processing availability, farmers in the region must schedule a slaughter date at a USDA approved slaughter facility before their livestock are born; and

Whereas, supply chain issues we experienced as a nation during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of the existing concentration in the nation's meat processing industry when consumers found limited availability and even empty meat cases in stores; and

Whereas, a strong local food economy is vital to the nutritional needs and public health of the state's citizenry; and

Whereas, there is a desire for consumers to know where and how their food is grown and raised and to have the ability to speak with the farmer producing their food; and

Whereas, exemptions and flexibility are already provided for poultry in the Poultry Products Inspection Act and for non-amenable species (i.e., species not covered under the Federal Meat Inspection Act) such as bison, deer, elk, and rabbits; and

Whereas, the USDA's existing regulations enable the processing of the meat from amenable species in a state licensed facility where the animal has been slaughtered under USDA inspection; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the New Hampshire house of representatives urges our congressional delegation to sponsor legislation, and also urges the USDA to adopt regulations, allowing for small scale and very small slaughter plants to use the Federal Meat Inspection Act's Custom Exempt meat processing inspection criteria with a third-party inspector present at slaughter, so that processed beef, pork, lamb, and chevron (goat meat) can be sold as individual cuts directly from the farm producer to the end consumer.

Let it further be resolved that copies of this resolution, signed by the speaker of the house, be forwarded by the house clerk to each member of the New Hampshire congressional delegation, the secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the administrator of the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Adopted by the NH House on 3/26/25. **Support**

Bills Found Inexpedient-to-Legislate (ITL) – these bills are dead

HB 69, *requiring businesses to use the federal E-Verify system of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.* **Oppose**

HB 106, *establishing a commission to determine the monetary costs of climate damage to the state of New Hampshire and the best means of recouping such costs.*

HB 174, *increasing the maximum weight of a utility terrain vehicle to 3,500 pounds unladen dry weight.* Increased the allowable weight of OHRVs on state-owned trails from 2,000 to 3,500 pounds. (RSA 215-A, I, XXIV) **Oppose**

HB 201-FN, *prohibiting the removal of claws from cats.* **Oppose**

HB 202, *relative to the duties of the fish and game commission.* Made the Fish and Game Commission advisory. **Oppose**

HB 240-FN-L, *(New Title) relative to nonpayment of dog licensing fees.* Changes current law to relieve municipalities of the requirement to issue a warrant for the civil forfeiture of an unlicensed dog for nonpayment of dog license fees by changing “shall” to “may” in existing statute. (RSA 466:14)

HB 262-FN, *relative to group licenses for dogs.* Changed group licensure from “5 or more” dogs to “7 or fewer” dogs, increased license fees & adds fees for owning more than 7 dogs and imposed additional requirements on holders of group licenses. (RSA 466:6)

HB 263, *relative to applications to the cost of care fund for livestock care.* Required applicants receiving funding from the Cost of Care Fund (RSA 437-B) demonstrate livestock were seized lawfully and

following consultation with experts in the care of the livestock seized. The bill is being taken up as part of *HB 616-FN*. **Support**

HB 291-FN, (New Title) relative to the penalty for incorrect application of fertilizers. Set violations in RSA 431 governing the application of fertilizers as a written warning for a first offense, violation subject to a \$250 fine for a second offense, and a misdemeanor for a third or subsequent offense. Existing penalties are established as follows:

431:18 Penalties. –

I. Any person who, personally or through an agent, violates any provision of this subdivision or rule adopted under this subdivision shall be guilty of a misdemeanor if a natural person, or guilty of a felony if any other person.

II. Any person who violates any provision of this subdivision or any rule adopted or order issued under this subdivision shall, in addition, be liable for a civil forfeiture not to exceed \$5,000 for each violation, for each day of a continuing violation, which may be collected in a civil action or in connection with an action for injunctive relief brought by the attorney general.

III. Any person who violates any provision of this subdivision, or any rule or order of the commissioner, shall be subject to the imposition of an administrative fine levied by the commissioner, not to exceed \$1,000 for each violation.

IV. The commissioner may apply for and the court may grant a temporary or permanent injunction restraining any person from violating or continuing to violate any of the provisions of this subdivision or any rule adopted hereunder, notwithstanding the existence of other remedies at law. The injunction shall be issued without bond.

HB 375, allowing municipalities to designate sections of state and local highways for all terrain vehicles.

HB 379, relative to youth employment during the school year and at night. Clarified language in the Youth Employment Law (RSA 276-A) and limiting youth night work by prohibiting work “later than 9:00 p.m. on Sunday through Thursday, or later than 11:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.”

HB 401, relative to animal testing funded by New Hampshire state funds. Prohibited any testing facility conducting ingredient or product testing in the state and receiving funding from the state of New Hampshire from using any traditional animal test method unless such method directly benefits animals.

HB 424, directing the department of agriculture, markets, and food to create forms for businesses to request information about service animals and establishing a committee to study the protection of business owners from requests to accommodate customers with fraudulent or untrained service animals.

HB 487, relative to providing employees with advance notice of the work schedule. Required employers with 15 employees or more employees provide one-week advance notice of their work schedule. Exempted health care facilities. **Oppose**

HB 567-FN, relative to the elimination of useful thermal energy from renewable energy classes. Removes biomass from within the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) law eliminating thermal energy classes and lowering overall RPS purchase obligations. **Oppose**

HB 573-FN-A, relative to the funding for search and rescue operations of the fish and game department and making an appropriation therefor. Funded Fish and Game search and rescue efforts through the state’s General Fund. **Support**

HB 575-FN, *prohibiting offshore wind energy infrastructure* (in New Hampshire). **Support** – Farm Bureau has specific policy stating: *We oppose locating wind turbines off the New Hampshire coast.*

HB 589-FN, *defining and prohibiting wanton animal waste and prohibiting certain wildlife hunting contests.* **Oppose** as Fish and Game is in the midst of addressing the issue through rulemaking.

HB 593-FN, *relative to loss of consortium involving pets.* Expanded the relationships eligible for potential loss of consortium damages to include pets. **Oppose**

HB 642, *allowing the sale of dehydrated meat without a homestead food license.*

HB 683-FN, *relative to off-highway recreational vehicles.* Removes requiring petitioners be responsible for the expense of notification of all abutters via verified mail of a public hearing regarding any highway on which OHRV use is sought and shifts notification requirements to municipalities. Current law (RSA 215-A) enables city or town councils and boards of selectmen in Coos and Grafton County to authorize OHRV use on town highways and on local sidewalks adjacent to state highways following a duly noticed public hearing. The bill would have also expanded this authority to city or town councils and boards of selectmen in, Carroll, Cheshire, Hillsborough, Merrimack, and Sullivan County. **Oppose**

HCR 4, *relative to rejecting all offshore wind energy projects in the waters off the coast of New Hampshire and the Gulf of Maine.* Calling for the rejection of all offshore wind projects in and around the waters off the coast of New Hampshire and the Gulf of Maine until such time as there is a more complete understanding of the effect such projects may have on the ocean's ecosystem, the fishing industry, and electric ratepayers. (Adopted by the House, not taken up by the Senate) **Support**

SB 46, *enabling municipalities to allow land impacted by new construction or reconstruction to be eligible for current use valuation only after a no cut, vegetated buffer is established and maintained.* Sought to enable giving municipalities authority to require shorefront land being removed from Current Use have a shoreland buffer maintained by enabling the adoption of ordinances requiring shoreland have a minimum 75-foot no-cut vegetative buffer. **Oppose**

SB 55, *providing temporary exemptions from the land use change tax for qualifying housing projects.* Established an exemption to payment of the Land Use Change Tax (20% of the full market value of the land) when developing open space land enrolled in Current Use that created a minimum of 20 residential units. **Oppose**

SB 177-FN, *relative to requiring New Hampshire employers with over 25 employees use the E-Verify system.* **Oppose**

Committee of Conference Non-Concurrences – results in killing the bill

HB 156, *(New Title) relative to the duties of the advisory committee on state procurement.* Created an advisory committee on state procurement of agricultural products (proposed RSA 21-I:14-e) to review state procurement policies and make recommendations to encourage local food production and conservation. This would have been in addition to the existing state Advisory Committee on State Procurement (RSA 21-I:14-d). (House non-concurred with Senate Amendment) **Support**

HB 342, *(New Title) relative to the approval process for new construction and to the adoption of energy efficient and clean energy districts by municipalities.*

Allowed property owners to build on their property without seeking a variance for minimum lot size or lot coverage if the proposed building density conformed to the density of the surrounding neighborhood as

well as with how the property is zoned, as verified by the local planning board and modified existing requirements for the adoption of energy efficient and clean energy districts by municipalities. "Density" was defined as "the number of dwelling units per acre or the percentage of lot coverage by buildings and structures" and "neighborhood" was defined as "properties within a 1,000-foot radius of the subject property's boundary lines." (House non-concurred with Senate Amendment)

Bills Indefinitely Postponed – results in killing the bill

HB 152-FN, prohibiting the sale and use of adhesive-based rodent traps. "Adhesive-based trap" is defined as "any device that is designed or is capable of being used to capture a rodent by means of an adhesive substance, including devices commonly known as glue traps, glue boards and any similar rodent trap." (House) **Oppose**

Bills on the Table (Body Tabling Bill) –may be removed from the table anytime this session with a majority vote

HB 251-FN, allowing the ownership of certain squirrels and raccoons. (House)

HB 526-FN, establishing a climate change and damage division in the department of environmental services. (House)

HB 568, allowing subdivision regulations concerning water supply. Allows subdivision regulations concerning water supply including requiring water supply studies, determining adequate water quantity for reasonably anticipated future water uses, and establishing minimum well testing requirements. Also clarifies the applicant's duty to pay associated costs. (House)

HB 616-FN, (New Title) relative to the confiscation of animals from persons suspected of or charged with abuse of animals and establishing a committee to study the animal cruelty statutes. Makes changes to the animal cruelty statute (RSA 644:8) to better ensure due process for animal owners as well as for the care of livestock being confiscated. The bill more specifically includes the following of primary interest to Farm Bureau:

- Removes the existing authority of an "officer of a duly licensed humane society" to take an animal into protective custody and limiting such authority to public law enforcement officials.
- Enables the State Veterinarian to appoint a "designee" to determine whether livestock may be confiscated.
- Provides any individual providing assistance at the request of law enforcement or the State Veterinarian shall be held harmless from either criminal or civil liability. (Currently only licensed veterinarians are afforded this protection in the law.)
- Where lactating animals are confiscated, proof must be demonstrated proper care and facilities will be provided for adults and offspring and no lactating animal will be separated from its non-weaned offspring and vice versa.

(Senate) **Support**

HB 764-FN, prohibiting the intentional release of polluting emissions, including cloud seeding, weather modification, excessive electromagnetic radio frequency, and microwave radiation and making penalties for violation of such prohibition. (House)

***SB 174**, prohibiting planning boards from considering the number of bedrooms a given unit or development has during the hearing and approval process. (House)*

***SB 163**, (New Title) repealing the temporary moratoria and limitation on building permits and the approval of subdivisions and site plans. Repeals the authority for a local legislative body to adopt an ordinance establishing a temporary moratoria and limitations on building permits and the approval of subdivisions and site plans. (House)*

***SB 290-FN**, relative to the definition of "torture" in animal abuse cases.
Adds a definition of "torture" in the animal cruelty statute as follows:*

RSA 644:8,II-b. In this section, "torture" means any negligent or purposeful act or omission that causes intensive or prolonged pain or suffering, causes serious physical injury, or causes the death of an animal due to such negligent or purposeful act or omission.

(Senate) **Oppose as proposed**

Bills "Retained" (House) or "Rereferred" (Senate) Committees for Further Study

House Retained Bills

Commerce and Consumer Affairs

SB 162-FN**, relative to restrictions on acquisition of ownership, controlling, and occupancy interests in real property by certain foreign principals on or around certain military installations, and criminal penalties and civil forfeiture procedures for illegal acquisition. – see **HB 2-FN-A-L

Environment and Agriculture

***HB 396**, exempting meat and meat food products slaughtered and prepared in state for sale in state from certain inspections. The Committee learned a change in federal law would be required to exempt meat from federal slaughter requirements. In leu of moving forward with HB 396, the Committee introduced and passed HR 18 and held HB 396 as a vehicle to move forward with a separate proposal if believed necessary.*

Executive Departments and Administration

***HB 96**, requiring New Hampshire builders to use the 2021 Energy Building codes or a similar code that achieves equivalent or greater energy savings.*

***SB 94**, prohibiting municipal amendments to the state building code. Prohibits municipalities from adopting new regulations that differ from the State Building Code.*

Finance

***HB 219**, (New Title) relative to changes to the minimum electric renewable portfolio standards.*

***HB 246-FN-A**, directing the state conservation committee to implement the conservation district climate resilience grant program and making an appropriation therefor. Appropriates \$50,000 to the NH*

Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food for disbursement by the NH Association of Conservation Districts towards its existing Climate Resilience Grant Program which provides funds to NH farmers to reduce the impact of their farm operations on climate change through greenhouse gas reduction and carbon sequestration as well as helping farms adapt to the changing climate. **Support**

Municipal and County Government

HB 453, *prohibiting municipalities from banning use of grounds maintenance and snow and ice removal equipment with internal combustion engines*. A prohibition could be overridden if a majority of the citizenry of the municipality votes in favor of such a prohibition.

Resources, Recreation and Development

HB 629-FN, *funding the operation maintenance and repair of state dams*. Establishes an annual fee on shoreline frontage (per linear foot) on water bodies maintained by a state-maintained dam and increases boat registration fees with the revenue raised going into the Dam Maintenance Fund. **Oppose as introduced**

Science, Technology and Energy

SB 106-FN, *relative to the participation of customer generators in net energy metering*. Requires customer-generators participating in net energy metering to consume at least 33 percent of their own generation. The bill would apply to customer-generators larger than one megawatt (and up to 5 megawatt) going into service after January 1, 2026 and not acting as a group net metering host, to consume at least 33 percent of their own generation, on an annual basis.

Transportation

SB 150-FN, *defining electric vehicle charging station and charging a fee for annual testing by the division of weights and measures*. Includes authorizing the Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food to appropriate funds for electric vehicle charging station testing and certification.

Senate Rereferred Bills

Commerce

HB 410-FN, *(New Title) limiting local authority to adopt restrictions on the building and development of residential properties*. Prohibits the local adoption of “extraordinary restrictions” on residential property unless the restriction is narrowly tailored to serve a compelling government interest in public health or safety. “Extraordinary restriction” is defined as an ordinance or regulation containing any of the following:

- (a) *Any minimum square footage requirement for a dwelling or unit in excess of 200 square feet or the square footage required to meet the state building code, whichever is greater.*
- (b) *Any lot size requirement greater than 5 gross acres per primary dwelling unit, or greater than 0.5 gross acres per primary dwelling unit if the lot is served by off-site municipal water and sewer systems.*
- (c) *Any road frontage requirement greater than 200 feet per primary dwelling unit, or greater than 50 feet if the lot is served by off-site water and sewer systems.*
- (d) *Prohibition on residential use in areas zoned for commercial use.*
- (e) *Restriction on in-home business use in areas zoned for residential use, provided such business use does not violate noise, pollution, garbage, or light ordinances.*
- (f) *Restriction on whether any dwelling unit is constructed on or off-site.*

(g) Local amendments to the state building code or state fire code regarding materials or methods of construction, which impact residential buildings of not more than 4 units.

SB 84-FN, relative to zoning procedures concerning residential housing. Sets maximum lot sizes for single-family residential uses based on the type of infrastructure servicing the lot.

SB 90, allowing high-density residential development on land zoned for commercial use. “High density residential zone” is defined as a “zoning classification that allows at least 20 residential units per acre provided” and allowed provided adequate infrastructure, including roads, water, and sewage systems, is available or provided to support development.

SB 175, relative to the use of covenants by municipalities. Grants municipalities authority to enforce private covenants while prohibiting municipalities and state government from requiring or encouraging covenants as a condition of zoning or land use approval - with exceptions made for workforce housing.

Energy and Natural Resources

SB 231, relative to road frontage requirements and setbacks for wetlands.

Limits road frontage requirements and setbacks from wetlands in municipal zoning ordinances to 50 feet (to allow for greater housing density) provided there is consistency with existing Shoreland Protection Law and other established environmental standards.

Finance

SB 239-FN, (New Title) appropriating funds to the fish and game department for continuing environmental review and to cover a deficit for previously instituted salary increases. Funding for environmental review is provided in the State Budget (HB 2).

SB 274-FN, (New Title) establishing a 4-year pilot program to improve rail trails in New Hampshire, including the establishment of 2 funds, the rail trails program fund and the emergency trail repair fund, and making appropriations therefor. Includes directing the Department of Transportation to facilitate the ownership and responsibilities for the following rail trails to the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources: Presidential, Pondicherry Section, Ammonoosuc Rail Trail, New Littleton-Bethlehem Segment, & Cheshire Rail Trail. In consultation with the New Hampshire Rail Trails Coalition, these rail trails would be managed by the Bureau of Trails, to rehabilitate, maintain, and improve the 83 miles of 4 rail corridors and appurtenant rail trails by rehabilitating abandoned rail corridors and maintaining already established rail trails.

Enrolled Bills – bills passed by the Legislature awaiting action by the Governor

HB 250, (Second New Title) enabling local governing bodies to regulate the muzzling of dogs.

HB 428-L, (New Title) relative to the state building code. Prohibits local legislative bodies from making any new changes to the state building codes.

HB 682, relative to the office of offshore wind industry, the offshore and port development commission, and the office of energy innovation. Removes the office of Offshore Wind Industry Development from within the Office of Energy innovation.

SB 283, relative to the calculation of floor-area-ratios under local building ordinances. Requires municipalities to exclude below-grade areas from floor-area-ratio (FAR) calculations, but allows

developers to utilize below-grade areas for certain purposes without impacting the calculation of FAR for the building.

Definitions & Bill Abbreviation Key

Chapter Law = when a bill is signed into law it is first published as a chapter law. For example, Chapter Law 142 is the 142nd bill or resolution that became law in a given year (Laws of 2024).

Committee of Conference = a bill must pass the House and Senate in identical form before it can be sent to the Governor. If a bill passes each body with differing language and one body does not agree to concur with the other body, they can establish a Committee of Conference (or Conference Committee) to try and iron out the differences.

Tabled = means to pause or set aside a bill. A bill may be tabled by a simple majority vote. A bill not removed from the table (a simple majority vote also removes a bill from the table) at the end of the legislative session is dead.

HB = House Bill – a bill where the prime sponsor is a Representative. House bills start in the House.

HR = House Resolution – measure adopted by solely the House. Resolutions not have the force of law but used to express opinion or sentiment.

HCR = House Concurrent Resolution – measure adopted by both the House & Senate. Resolutions not have the force of law but used to express opinion or sentiment.

SB = Senate Bill – a bill where the prime sponsor is a Senator. Senate bills start in the Senate.

FN = Fiscal Note – means a cost estimate prepared by relevant agencies indicating the bill's fiscal impact is attached.

A = appropriates funds

L = **LOCAL** - contains information on the bill's impact on municipal revenue.

Contact NHFB Policy Director Rob Johnson if you have questions by phoning him at 312-6877 or through email at robj@nhfarmbureau.org. You can also stay abreast of what is happening in the NH Legislature affecting agriculture and landowners by subscribing to the NHFB's Friday Review, a public affairs review for members published weekly during the legislative session.