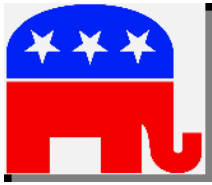


HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE



Republican Agenda

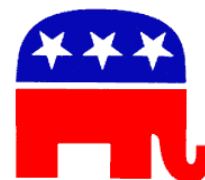
2010-2011 Legislative Session

Four years ago the Democrats took control of the New Hampshire House of Representatives for the first time in many decades. Thanks to overspending, increased taxation, downshifting millions of dollars to our cities and towns, bonding operating expenses, and the use of onetime money and various accounting gimmicks to “balance” the budget, the state is now facing deficit that is approaching \$1 billion—which represents \$700 for every man, woman and child in New Hampshire.

According to a report by the nonpartisan Legislative Budget Assistant’s office, in their very first budget Democrats increased state general fund spending by 17.5%. Their second budget increased spending even further at a time when nearly every state in the country cut spending by an average of 2%. Over the four year period, Democrats increased spending by \$600M while revenues declined by \$100M. By moving expenditures off line, Democrats used the accounting gimmick to try and give the illusion that they had actually cut spending. But over the last two budgets, total spending, including both federal and general funds, rose from \$9.3 billion to \$11.5 billion.

Fortunately the voters of this state were paying attention to the fiscal mismanagement and returned Republicans to the majority in the House. Now the real work begins. For the past four years we have tried time and again to protect the New Hampshire Advantage that the state has enjoyed throughout the northeast—one of less government, lower taxes, and a business friendly environment. The people have given us a mandate and it is time to govern as we campaigned—on a message of fiscal responsibility. After many information-gathering discussions with members of the Republican caucus it is clear that our focus should remain on the budget, first and foremost. Based on those discussions with our caucus, leadership has formulated the following legislative agenda which will serve as our guide through the legislative session:

- **Government Spending & Regulations**
- **Business & Enterprise**
- **Retirement Reform**
- **Education Excellence**
- **Personal Rights & Social Responsibility**



2011-2012 HOUSE REPUBLICAN AGENDA

GOVERNMENT SPENDING & REGULATIONS

- Reduce state spending
- Scale back over-burdening licensure requirements
- Where appropriate, reduce certain taxes & fees
- Protect against further downshifting
- Repeal 'Evergreen' Law
- Oppose unfunded Federal mandates
- Repeal mandates harmful to quality of life (Comprehensive Shoreland Act)
- Encourage agency consolidation to reduce state costs

BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE

- Scale back insurance mandates
- Re-examine corporate tax structure
- Rein in excessive agency rules
- Put out the 'open for business' sign in New Hampshire
- Promote economic, development and tourism growth
- Examine privatization of state responsibilities
- Eliminate harmful legislation regarding card-check and agency fees

RETIREMENT REFORM

- Change System's Board
- Examine Benefit Packages
- Examine Health Benefits
- Amend Percentages Paid

EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

- Constitutional amendment
- Re-examine definition of adequacy
- Restoring fairness to educational funding
- Support Choice in Education
- Limit Restrictions on Charter Schools
- Prevent further stripping away of home-schooling rights

PERSONAL RIGHTS & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Voter Identification & Domicile
- Parental Notification
- Protect Second Amendment Rights
- TANF Reform
- Support sensible Judicial Reform (family court, court accessibility)



GOVERNMENT SPENDING & REGULATIONS

Our commitment is to create jobs, lower taxes, and end economic uncertainty

Preamble: *Under New Hampshire's Constitution, the people of this State have a right to require of their lawgivers and magistrates an exact and constant observance of the principles of justice, moderation, and frugality. Granite State taxpayers have a right to state government that does not swell beyond its means. House Republicans firmly believe that low taxes are the result of low spending. Therefore, House Republicans are focused on pursuing policies that promote this conviction and will oppose policies that are fiscally irresponsible or reckless.*

New Hampshire House Republicans are committed to accomplishing the following:

Reducing State Spending: House Republicans will fight the growth of government and will tighten the belt of state government in Concord and cut wasteful and duplicative programs that put our state into further debt.

Scale back overburdening licensure requirements: New Hampshire's citizens are over-licensed and our businesses overburdened, this all leads to the reason our businesses have not thrived over the past four years; we will do what we can to scale back some of these business stifling regulations.

Appropriately and Responsibly cut taxes and fees: Over the past four years Granite Staters saw over 100 taxes or fees raised or implemented on them. All of these must be reviewed and as many cut as our economy allows. We will actively oppose attempts to increase taxes or fees. House Republicans are committed to ensuring that New Hampshire families are able to keep more of their hard-earned money.

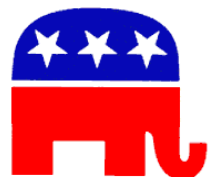
Protect against downshifting of costs onto our municipalities: House Republicans will be vigilant against proposals that would further burden the cities and towns of New Hampshire and result in increases on local property taxes.

Repealing the "Evergreen" Law: House Republicans will repeal this legislation that shifts the balance of power to unions during contract negotiations and protect taxpayers from unreasonable raises in their taxes during economic downturns.

Actively oppose unfunded federal mandates or other suppressions on individual liberty: New Hampshire has a long and proud history of fighting against unfunded mandates, as evidenced by Article 28-A of the New Hampshire Constitution. House Republicans will push back against all burdensome federal unfunded mandates that increase state costs or any schemes that restrict the liberties and freedoms of the citizens of New Hampshire.

Repeal mandates harmful to quality of life: Mandates such as the 'comprehensive shoreland protection act' and RGGI have in fact harmed our citizens and we must scale these back to truly protect our citizens and their way of life.

Encourage agency consolidation to reduce state costs: We will examine agency consolidation to see if we can produce real state savings as opposed to closing buildings but not cutting jobs, borrowing and monetizing.





BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE



New Hampshire is “Open for Business”

Preamble: *Policies that enhance job creation, end economic uncertainty, and make New Hampshire more competitive will be an urgent and top priority. House Republicans will actively support policies that get Granite Staters working again. We will oppose attacks on free enterprise and taking steps to assure current businesses and future entrepreneurs that the New Hampshire legislature will not stifle their ability to compete and thrive.*

New Hampshire House Republicans are committed to accomplishing the following:

Scale back expensive and burdensome insurance mandates: House Republicans will repeal costly insurance mandates that drive up costs and kill small-businesses. Excessive mandates are *de facto* taxes on employers and consumers that stifle job growth, hamper innovation, and postpone investment in the economy.

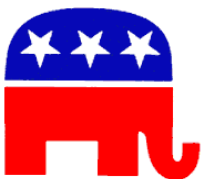
Re-examining New Hampshire’s corporate tax structure: New Hampshire has the highest corporate tax rate in America and our tax structure is a fly in the ointment for our state. House Republicans are committed to taking a close look at reforming our business tax structure and cutting those taxes where possible.

Reining in excessive state agency rules: House Republicans are committed to ending the authority of state agencies to create laws through rulemaking that harasses business and deters job growth. House Republicans will oppose all legislation that grants broad rulemaking authority to any agency or department.

Promoting economic, development and tourism growth: By business tax reform and appropriate budgeting we increase our ability to entice new business to start, expand and relocate to New Hampshire. Utilizing and promoting our natural resources not only aids in that endeavor, but also increases tourism. Further, repealing the rooms and meals tax increase aids in proving that we are in fact ‘open for business.’

Examine potentially privatizing state responsibilities: House Republicans are willing to look at whether there may be savings to taxpayers in privatizing certain state agencies and functions.

Restoring the proper balance between business and labor: House Republicans are committed to restoring a proper balance between business and labor that ensures that business is not held back by excessive union influence. House Republicans will repeal card-check and scale back agency fees.





RETIREMENT REFORM

Reforming the system and securing our future

Preamble: *Our state employees are justifiably concerned about their retirement, as our current pension system is on the brink of insolvency. To avoid having our state workers lose much of what they have earned, House Republicans must have the courage to confront the estimated \$3 Billion unfunded liability problem within the system. House Republicans understand that we have an obligation to both taxpayers and state workers to find solutions that will guarantee the solvency of the retirement system without requiring higher taxes.*

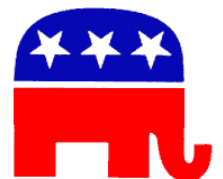
New Hampshire House Republicans are committed to accomplishing the following:

Reforming the System's Board of Trustees: To accomplish much needed reforms there must be a balance among those tasked with paying into, those receiving from, and those directing the interests of the system. House Republicans are committed to striking a balance on the board of trustees to ensure that all ideas for reform are received with an open mind.

Examining Benefit Packages: Under the current system, government workers receive retirement benefits that are often more generous than what is available to Granite Staters who work in the private sector. House Republicans must reform benefit packages. We must seriously consider bringing new government workers in under a different deal where they receive a defined-contribution retirement plan similar to the 401(k) plans that most taxpayers have.

Examine Health Benefits: To understand our pension crisis, we must closely examine the health benefits that previous legislatures have promised but are now unsustainable. Other states have workforces with a vastly higher percentage of union workers than New Hampshire yet have shown that reform in this area is possible.

Amend Percentages Paid: Gone will be the days when a person can cash out at 125% of their salary because of 'special duty pay,' retirees become consultants in their previous roles at 150% of previous salary, spiking and the like. Gaming the system has helped contribute to the system's current status, and we must make sure that employees don't have those loopholes available to them.





EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

Seeking Excellence in Education

Preamble: *House Republicans believe, as our platform states: “Educating the citizens of New Hampshire is our hope for the future of this great state. We believe that New Hampshire must provide its children an education based upon excellence.” We are committed to advancing policies that achieve this goal. In doing so, we recognize that money alone isn’t the answer and that a greater degree of competition in education is essential.*

New Hampshire House Republicans are committed to accomplishing the following:

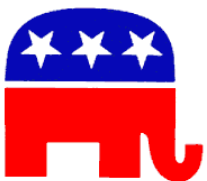
Constitutional Amendment: Education and the proper responsibility of our government to provide it has been part of the political debate since our nation’s earliest days. However, the legislature’s ability to appropriately determine and advance the most effective education polices and funding has been severely hindered by the improper encroachment of the judicial branch. House Republicans are committed to ending the restrictive confines of the *Claremont* decisions by passing a constitutional amendment that establishes the legislature as the sole authority on education and allows us to target education aide as necessary.

Reassess New Hampshire’s Adequacy Definition: It is clear that the Democrats definition of an “adequate education” passed in 2007 has little relation to the reality of an adequate education in New Hampshire. Rather than identifying the substantive educational programs that constitute an adequate education, such as: history, algebra, chemistry, world languages, music, visual arts and literature, the process became a legislative wish list that included such excesses as an aide in every classroom, free and reduced lunch formulas for non eligible students and elevated compensation levels and more. It is clear that the current definition of adequacy is off target, excessively expensive and unsustainable.

Restoring Fairness to Education Funding: One of the many inequities caused by the *Claremont* decisions was the practice having the taxpayers of donor towns subsidize state education grants to receiver towns. We must do all we can to eliminate this practice once and for all.

Support Choice in Education: Whether through open-enrollment, vouchers or tax credits, House Republicans favor the right of parents to determine the best means of educating their children and believe that the best way to accomplish that is to give them the ability to educate where and how they see fit.

Limit Restrictions on Charter Schools: Democrats enacted a moratorium on new charter schools in the state; charter schools offer a statistically proven alternative education path for those students who need it. The competition for dollars has created a rift with unions and administrators but to the detriment of students; students deserve to be educated in a manner that works. We will seek to prevent further restrictions on these positive institutions.



Preserve Home-schooling Rights: House Republicans are committed to protecting the rights of our high exceeding home-school students here in New Hampshire and will oppose burdensome regulations through either legislation or excessive departmental rules.

PERSONAL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Supporting the principles of “We the People”



Preamble: *At the core of the Republican Party are a set of principles and ideals that set us apart from other political parties. A strong belief that voters should be voting legally, that our Second Amendment rights our sacred, that parents have a fundamental purpose in the lives of their children, that a person may need a helping hand but not necessarily a hand out and that our courts need to be fair, open and looked at with a mind to reform them.*

New Hampshire House Republicans are committed to accomplishing the following:

Taking Reasonable Steps to End Voter Fraud: The potential for voter fraud creates a real problem, issues like the ACORN controversy have proven that, and sensible legislation that requires a person to show their identification to vote and amends language on residency and domicile will ensure that New Hampshire’s elections are fair and free of voter fraud.

Protecting Second Amendment Rights: The Second Amendment is a Constitutional guarantee on the rights of law abiding citizens to keep and bear arms. New Hampshire has a low crime rate and we believe it is because we have some of the least onerous gun regulations in the country. However, situations like Ward Bird’s and brandishing weapons have caused a fundamental concern about our rights and we will work to correct these problems.

Restoring Parental Notification: This bill is not a debate about social issues; House Republicans will support a constitutionally viable parental notification bill so that parents have the right to know what is going on in the lives of their minor children.

Reforming Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): There is a point in peoples lives when they sometimes, through no fault of their own, end up unemployed or homeless; this is when the state must help with TANF. The best way to help these people is to get them employed and on their way off TANF roles. The last Republican legislature enacted some common sense TANF reforms that got people back to work and gave them a positive outlook for the future. The previous legislature repealed some of these common sense reforms and our roles have increased. We can get people back to work, we can get people off TANF and we can do it in this biennium.

Support for Sensible Judicial Reform: Our courts have become less accessible; from the branch directing that courts be closed around the state, to marital masters being given too broad an authority; from the courts ordering furloughs, further limiting access to our citizens to senseless and costly lawsuits which taxpayers are often on the hook for, we must be vigilant in making the judicial branch more accountable and more equitable to all of our citizens.

