

Senator David H. Watters

Representing Senate District 4: Barrington, Dover, Rollinsford, Somersworth

May 2014



Policy Committee Assignments

- Transportation
- Executive Departments & Administration

Statutory & Study Committee Assignments

Coastal Risk & Hazards Commission

Commission on Housing Policy & Regulation

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

State Suggestion & Extraordinary Service Award Evaluation Committee

County-State Finance Commission

NH Conservation Number Plate Advisory Committee

Administrative Rules (JLCAR)

Joint Legislative Historical Committee

Board of Claims

Legislative Update: A Successful Session

Dear Constituents,

With the legislative session moving into its final weeks, I wanted to take a break from the round of committee hearings and Senate votes to write about the productive work of the Senate in passing important legislation to provide jobs, improve the economy, and support our families. While there are needs that remain unmet and much work still to be done, I can point with some pride to the bipartisan spirit in the Senate to pass bills for the good of the people of New Hampshire.

The most important compromise was the passage of the New Hampshire Health Protection Program. This bipartisan bill provides a path to private insurance coverage for over 50,000 low-income citizens. I worked hard to support these basic principles: expand health insurance for people with jobs by helping them afford their employer's plan; expand coverage to people and families under 138% of the Federal poverty level through private insurance; personal responsibility; and no cost to the New Hampshire taxpayer. I also supported the necessary expansion of insurance providers to create a competitive marketplace and to create networks to include all New Hampshire hospitals. New Hampshire will be a healthier state, and individuals and families will no longer face discrimination for preexisting conditions, lifetime cost limits, or going without needed medical care.



Gov. Hassan Signing Health Protection Program Bill



Sen. Watters, Jessica Paradis, Somersworth School Board, and Kathy Beebe and Emily Murphy of Sexual Assault Support Services

We all saw the damage this winter did to our roads, but the deterioration of roads and bridges has been a growing crisis across the state and in District 4. I cosponsored the bill to raise the road toll by 4.2 cents. Every penny of this will go to roads and bridges, with a significant portion to local bridges and to local municipalities. Safe roads are vital to economic development and safety, and this bill will protect property tax payers by getting road funds to communities. We will see the results quickly as paving projects begin, for example, on Rte. 125 in Barrington, and with work on local red-listed bridges. The road toll increase, and the Ten-Year Highway Plan, will mean completion of the work on the Dover Point Bridges and on Spaulding Turnpike interchanges in Dover.

Protecting our families is a deeply personal mission in my service as your State Senator. I was proud to cosponsor "Joshua's Law," a law born out of tragedy that makes domestic abuse a crime and offers other protections to families. I cosponsored the Paycheck Equity Act to ban discrimination in pay based on sex for equal work. I was the prime sponsor of important legislation to refocus and support the work of the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment. and I was the prime sponsor of SB 348, creating a Commission to Study Sexual Abuse Prevention Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools. For a full listing of my sponsored and cosponsored bills, enter 'Watters' at http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_Status/.

Page 1 continued

It is a great disappointment that the Senate did not pass a bill to raise the minimum wage. I took the “Minimum Wage Challenge” to experience in part what it means to live on \$7.25/hour or take-home pay of \$268/week. This meant a groceries budget of \$5.45 a day and finding out how to apply for a Section 8 voucher or getting on the 3-to-4 year waiting list for public housing in Dover. I am committed to fighting for an increase, and I will work tirelessly with businesses, municipalities, chambers of commerce, labor, and advocates for economic justice to craft commonsense legislation that must pass.

There is much work still to be done this session, and I will report on the full results of my legislative agenda in the June Newsletter. In the meantime, please call or write with questions and advice, or to ask for any assistance needed in dealing with state agencies.

Working for District 4 Communities

Legislative work means considering bills and policies that affect the entire state, but I always make sure a bill is right for District 4. This involves constant contact with constituents, local government, businesses, and other groups.

It was a great experience to attend the “Envision Barrington Community Profile” meetings on April 11-12, with sessions exploring Barrington’s future goals for a town center and library, conservation of resources, educational opportunities, and economic development. My task will be to find state resources when possible to support local goals, to help cut red tape at state agencies, and to propose needed legislation.

On April 15, I hosted Department of Resources and Economic Development Director Rose at a “Hilltop Summit on Career and Technical Education and STEM Education” at the Somersworth CTE center. We were joined by Somersworth educators, city leaders, area economic development directors, and employers to discuss how to improve business and educational partnerships. My Senate Bill 335 establishes a commission to pursue these ideas and to create a tax credit program for business investment in CTE centers.

*Cliff Sinnott,
Chair, Coastal
Commission, Sen.
Watters, and Steve
Bird, Dover
Planning Director*



*Sen. Watters and
Somersworth
Mayor Dana
Hilliard*



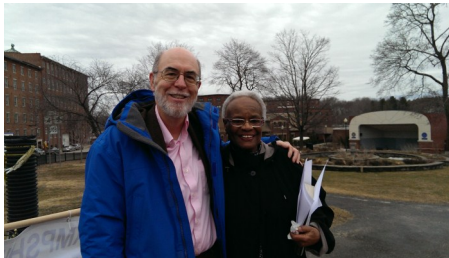
Given the importance of career and technical education, I worked to secure \$13.5 million to renovate and expand Dover’s CTE center. Through an amendment I crafted, Dover will move to the top of the priority list for state funding and start receiving funds this summer. Most importantly, there will be a 75/25 state/local funding match which will save Dover taxpayers nearly \$3 million dollars.

Page 2 continued

As a member of the Transportation Committee, I have taken a particular interest in transportation funding for the district, especially in the Ten-Year Highway Plan. Working with legislators in both parties, the Governor's Council, the Governor, the Department of Transportation, and local officials, I argued for inclusion of funding for upgrades to the Route 108 corridor from Dover to Rochester. This is an economic lifeline in the District. The Plan also includes a proposal for \$2 million of funding for Exit 10 on the Spaulding Turnpike, a long-needed access for economic development in Somersworth and at the Granite State Business Park.

Environmental issues remain an important legislative agenda item. The Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission that my legislation established last year held its April monthly meeting in Dover to receive the New England Climate Adaptation Project Climate Change Risk Assessment for Dover which shows the impact of sea-level rise and storm inundation on the City.

*Sen. Watters and Carmen
Buford-Paige, Seacoast
NAACP*



*Umesh Koirala, Nepalese
-American Community
Leader, and Sen. Watters*



I am strongly committed to meeting with District groups to ensure that the diversity of our area, both long-time residents and new arrivals, is represented in Concord. As we debate issues of economic development, fair wages, and education, I want to be sure there is opportunity for all.

To hear constituents concerns and ideas, as well as to report further on my work in Concord, there will be town hall meetings over the next few weeks. Please attend!

Town Hall Meetings

Barrington, Monday, May 19, 5-6 p.m., Town Gym, Ramsdell Rd.

Dover, Tuesday, June 3, Dover Public Library, 7-8 p.m.

Somersworth, Tuesday, June 10, City Hall Council Chamber, 7-8 p.m.

It is a privilege to serve the people of Barrington, Dover, Rollinsford, and Somersworth.

Our democracy depends on legislators who hear the voices of the people.

Sincerely,

Senator David Watters

**33 North State Street
Concord, NH 03301
Legislative Office Building Room 101-A
David.Watters@leg.state.nh.us
(603) 271-8567**