

Senator David Watters 2022 Bills

January 10, 2022

SB 421 - Relative to dual and concurrent enrollment for career and technical education center students.

For the dual and concurrent enrollment program, this bill, at the request of CCSNH, clarifies when payment is made to support the tuition and the procedure for making the program available to students in non-public schools.

SB 279 - Establishing a study committee on harm reduction and overdose prevention programs.

This bill will investigate best practices for establishing a harm reduction and overdose prevention program including safe injection sites.

SB 202 - Prohibiting the sale of cosmetic products tested on animals.

This bill is at the request of the ASPCA as an effort across the country to ensure that states have in statutes needed protections against animal testing.

SB 257 - Enabling municipalities to incorporate sewage disposal systems as part of their stormwater utility.

This bill is enabling legislation that builds upon existing statute regarding nitrogen reductions through stormwater management. It was developed in the Commission on Marine Natural Resources and Environment, working with NHDES, to help municipalities around the Great Bay estuary under EPA mandates and any community facing MS4 regulation. It enables municipalities that choose to set up a stormwater utility to incorporate measures to improve septic systems.

SB 258 - Relative to the graves of African Americans alive during the period of American enslavement.

This bill builds on existing statute on preservation of burial grounds to provide needed attention to the increasing number of identified burial sites across the state for enslaved African Americans. The preservation of the African Burial Ground in Portsmouth provided a model for involving the descendant community in appropriate and respectful preservation and recognition of such sites.

SB 298 - Repealing the law relative to certain discrimination in public workplaces and education.

This bill repeals the so-called “divisive concepts” language enacted in the budget, including the teaching prohibition in RSA 193:40, and the language in RSA 354-A:29 through RSA 354-A:34. These provisions handcuff classroom education and subject teachers to legal action.

SB 308 - Relative to driver's licenses for certain visa holders.

This bill clarifies that certain nonresident agricultural workers in New Hampshire under the Federal H-2A program can drive on an agricultural license issued by another state or under certain conditions. It addresses problems that have arisen when such licenses have not been recognized.

SB 263 - Establishing the New Hampshire youth environmental education and conservation council.

This bill gives New Hampshire young people an opportunity to learn about New Hampshire conservation, environment, and outdoor recreation and education in order to advise the legislature about their concerns and priorities. It was developed with the support of members of the Youth Advisory Council who believe this will be an opportunity for work focused on environmental concerns. It connects well with the changes made last year to education requirements on environment and outdoor recreation education, so the council will be timely.

SB 417 - Establishing an electric school bus pilot program.

This bill provides school districts and school bus companies with an opportunity to partner with utilities or other investors to provide electric school buses. This will save money for school districts and improve student health. It enables investors to pay the price differential between a conventionally fueled bus and an electric bus in return for utilization of the batteries as storage to offset peak demand cost spikes. It uses VW settlement funding and federal funding for charging infrastructure, increasing savings for municipalities.

SB 264 - Relative to certain references to the department of energy.

This bill is a request from consumer advocate Don Kreis to account for the creation of the Department of Energy.

SB 389 – Defining mobile service garages and relative to state vehicle inspections.

This bill was stalled by COVID after passing the Senate, so it is reintroduced to allow this form of repair and inspection service to operate in the state.

SB 440 - Relative to approval of offshore wind energy contracts.

This bill ensures New Hampshire's interests are protected when power purchase agreements are proposed by utilities for Gulf of Maine offshore wind resources. It resembles the bill supported last session by Senate Energy and Natural Resources, but it removes the requirements for a state-mandated

procurement that was felt to be unnecessary or premature. This version will protect the interests of New Hampshire ratepayers, fisheries, municipalities, and the environment.

SB 268 - Relative to the approval of power purchase agreements for offshore wind energy resources from the Gulf of Maine.

This bill directs the NHDES through the Coastal Program to invoke consistency in respect to offshore wind development. It is meant to protect New Hampshire fisheries, environmental, and transit interests by asserting that these interests may be affected by development. It enables, through NOAA guidelines, the state to exert control over the Federal coastal zone, from 3 to 200 miles offshore. The Bureau of Ocean Management Gulf of Maine Task Force process must take into account the findings through consistency. The bill also identifies the existing coastal program fund as the potential repository for mitigation and other funds that may arise from the impacts of offshore wind development. The bill was written in consultation with NHDES, including Mark Sanborn, and NH Fish and Game.

SB 270 - Establishing a low-moderate income community solar savings program and relative to statewide energy efficiency programs.

In light of the PUC order on energy efficiency, this bill, through redraft of an underlying LSR on low-income community solar, restores the existing energy efficiency program as it was authorized through 2020. It is the result of consultation with Don Kreis, the utilities, and others as a way to reset the program and allow the legislature and the PUC to then consider future changes to the program. It is similar to HB549, but it does add the capacity for interested parties to work with the PUC and the legislature on the future funding levels for the program. The low-income community solar section replicates the methodology Eversource uses in Connecticut to provide anonymous account information to groups interested in aggregating users to determine where to establish the low-income solar programs already authorized in statute.

SB 447 - Establishing the electric vehicle and infrastructure fund.

This bill provides legislative guidance on the use of electric vehicle charging infrastructure funding from Federal sources. It was written with Commissioner Sheehan NHDOT staff's input as a practical way to ensure that this funding is spent in accordance with the plans established by the EV Infrastructure commission and by Governor Sununu's consultant report. It will enable the NHDOT to utilize private contractors to get this work done efficiently and expeditiously.

SB 321 - Relative to the purchase of output of limited electrical energy producers in intrastate commerce and including qualifying storage systems.

This bill arises from the Limited Electrical Energy Producers (LEEP) Study Committee hearings. It clarifies the definition of an electrical producer.

SB 448 - Requiring the reduction of fossil fuel use across state facilities and establishing a state government energy committee.

This bill's primary purpose is to require planning and reporting by state agencies on vehicle efficiency and electrification goals. The state fleet purchasing manager has been working in this direction. It was felt that it should be drafted in the context of the existing executive order on state energy efficiency goals and incorporate the reporting requirements of the executive order into statute.

SB 379 - Establishing the solid waste management fund and establishing a solid waste disposal surcharge.

This bill addresses the issue of land-fill capacity and its relation to out-of-state waste. It establishes a tipping fee that is rebated for the purposes of source reduction to New Hampshire municipalities, and provides the fee income from out-of-state waste to DES to support source reduction programs. This bill had the bipartisan support of the senate, but it was tabled due to COVID. It was developed with full participation of the NH solid waste industry, NHDES, and municipalities.

SB XXX Directing the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to initiate rulemaking concerning ambient groundwater pollution for certain PFAS compounds.