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NHSBA Legislative Update – April 7, 2017

SB 193: As was previously reported in last week's Legislative Update and special Legislative Alert, SB 193 was heard before the House Education Committee on Tuesday April 4, 2017. SB 193 seeks to create a voucher program whereby a student could withdraw from public school and be eligible to receive a "scholarship" equal to the per pupil adequacy aid grant plus differentiated aid each school district receives for that student.

NHSBA provided both written and oral testimony in opposition to SB 193. Please see March 31, 2017 NHSBA Legislative Update and the March 29, 2017 NHSBA Legislative Alert for more information as to NHSBA's position on SB 193.

NHSBA is pleased to report that numerous school board members and superintendents attended the April 4th hearing and testified in opposition to SB 193.

HB2 – State Budget: The House Finance Committee removed Governor Sununu's proposed funding for full-day kindergarten from the state budget. Gov. Sununu proposed \$18 million over the next two years to target full-day kindergarten funding to the state's economically challenged communities. Governor Sununu is still hopeful that the Senate will put the funding back, saying that "full-day kindergarten is absolutely necessary here in the state of New Hampshire." House Speaker Shawn Jasper said that, "the capacity of a 6-year-old to be attentive in a classroom for a full day is pretty much non-existent."

However, the Senate did pass SB 191 by a vote of 21-2. SB 191 seeks to reinstates the targeted kindergarten funding program.

On Wednesday April 5, 2017, the House of Representatives voted down the Finance Committee's recommended budget by a vote of 220-134. The House is currently reconvening in an attempt to reach a budget agreement.

SB 108 and SB 248 – Annual Meetings: These bills relate to the ongoing issue of legislative attempts to ratify school district and town annual meetings that may have been affected by inclement weather.

SB 108 sought to allow school districts and towns to hold a special meeting for the purpose of ratifying all actions taken at school district and town annual meetings, primarily if the annual meeting was postponed due to the weather. This bill was deadlocked in the House Election Law Committee with a vote of 10-10.

SB 248 originated as a bill to study the rescheduling of elections. The bill is currently with the House Election Law Committee. While not certain, there is some anticipation that this bill may be amended in some manner to seek clarification or ratification of this year's annual meetings. NHSBA will keep its members apprised as these matters develop.