



Capitol Report

New Hampshire Senator Lou D'Allesandro • Winter 2014



Health coverage to be key issue

An effort to provide health insurance coverage to about 50,000 Granite Staters who currently have none, while creating new jobs and boosting the state's economy, will again be a central topic for lawmakers in the 2014 legislative session.

A bipartisan compromise to expand Medicaid coverage offered by Gov. Maggie Hassan was approved by the House in November's two-week special session. Senate Republicans rejected the compromise and ultimately voted down their own bill as well.

Still, Sen. Lou D'Allesandro, a supporter of the compromise, said the effort will be revived in the new session, saying leaders in both parties are

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D'Allesandro to introduce bill to expand gambling

Looking to protect taxpayers and fund needed priorities, Sen. Lou D'Allesandro is once again introducing legislation to permit expanded gaming in the Granite State.

With strong support from Gov. Maggie Hassan, a bipartisan majority in the Senate and a bipartisan coalition in the House, gaming legislation that would have created over 1,000 jobs in Southern New Hampshire came close to finally passing last year. D'Allesandro believes now the time has finally come.

"This gaming legislation will boost our economy, create jobs, attract private capital and help fund education, roads and bridges, and economic development without dipping into taxpayers'

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D'Allesandro honored as victims' advocate

Sen. Lou D'Allesandro was honored recently for nearly four decades of leadership to combat domestic and sexual violence with his induction into the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence's Hall of Fame.

NHCADSV Chair Elizabeth Garon described D'Allesandro as "one of the strongest advocates for victims" in the State Senate, noting that it was his leadership that helped restore domestic violence funding to the state budget this past session.

But Garon also pointed to numerous other efforts by Senator D'Allesandro, including sponsoring a bill to extend the time in which predators could be prosecuted for sexual assault of children. His efforts, she said, have helped make New Hampshire a safer state.

The award recognized "Senator D'Allesandro's perseverance and dedication" to the cause of battling sexual and domestic violence and his efforts especially on behalf of children, which the organization said proved him "to be a true champion to survivors in New Hampshire."

The Hall of Fame was created by the NHCADSV to recognize those "special individuals" who have assisted the organization in its efforts to protect New Hampshire from domestic and sexual violence and to promote the Coalition. ★



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Gambling

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pockets," said D'Allesandro.

D'Allesandro said the new bill would resemble last year's legislation, which would have generated an estimated \$80 million in licensing fees in the first two years after passage and then \$130 million in gaming taxes in ensuing years. It would have permitted a casino

with more than 5,000 video slot machines and 500 table games and established a commission to consider possible future additional gaming sites.

While gaming legislation did not pass last year, the state Gambling Regulatory Oversight Authority was created and continues to work toward developing a regulatory system

to protect the state should expanded gaming be permitted.

"I'm confident that we can develop a plan that protects the state and our taxpayers, while boosting our economy, creating jobs and economic opportunity not just from gaming, but from activities that will develop around it," said D'Allesandro. ★

Health coverage

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talking about a new compromise.

“This isn’t a partisan issue, this is an issue of common sense,” said D’Allesandro, adding that if nothing is done, the cost of health care for those unable to pay will continue to be shifted to small businesses and those who have insurance.

Several analysts have said Medicaid expansion could bring billions of additional dollars to the state’s economy and increase personal income, while cutting household spending on health care by almost \$100 million.

“It makes no sense not to expand coverage to our friends and neighbors who can’t afford health insurance on their own and turn down \$340 million in federal funds to support that expansion,” said D’Allesandro noting the comments of Senate Republican Leader Jeb Bradley that “helping people with their health insurance needs is appropriate when that help is necessary.”

D’Allesandro also noted that similar Medicaid expansions had been supported by Republicans as diverse as Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey and Jan Brewer of Arizona. ★

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Rest in Peace, Ray Burton

NNew Hampshire has lost a great public servant, and there will be a void in the North Country and throughout the Granite State with the passing of Executive Councilor Raymond Burton.

Burton, New Hampshire’s longest-serving member of the Executive Council and a tireless advocate for the North Country, died Nov. 12. He was 74.

“My dear friend and colleague in the public arena for many years has left a legacy of service and commitment to doing the right thing,” Sen. Lou D’Allesandro said.

A Republican, Burton was first elected to the council in 1977. Aside from a brief time in 1980, he was re-elected every two years since then. The five-member council approves state contracts and nominations. Burton received numerous awards for his dedication to North Country causes. A bridge in Bath and a Southern New Hampshire Services’ building in North Woodstock have been named in his honor.

“If a bridge or road project developed in the north, chances are he helped make it happen,” D’Allesandro said. “It’s my hope that those projects will help assure that he’ll never be forgotten.” ★



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D'Allesandro's bill would set up fund to help victims of FRM scandal

Sen. Lou D'Allesandro will continue his strong advocacy on behalf of New Hampshire citizens who were victimized by the Financial Resources Mortgage (FRM) scandal.

D'Allesandro noted the state took the first step with the Senate's passage in the 2013 session of bipartisan legislation authored by D'Allesandro and then-Senate President Peter Bragdon, R-Milford.

But a House committee deadlocked in considering the bill, meaning it will go to the House floor at the beginning of the 2014 session with a neutral recommendation.

"Our job here is to right a wrong," said D'Allesandro, in urging the House to quickly pass the bill. "This legislation will not replace

every dollar lost, but the idea is to give the victims something back."

FRM was a state-licensed business which over the period of nine years racked up more than 70 violations of state financial laws, and is alleged to have defrauded at least 150 investors of up to \$20 million.

A legislative committee, state agencies and the secretary of state's office investigated the fraud.

Under D'Allesandro's bill, which the House will consider in the 2014 session, a recovery fund would be set up and funded with a percentage of income from fines and settlements relating to state securities laws and settlements obtained by the Department of Justice.