



NH SENATE PRESS RELEASE

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Senator Levesque Champions Election Law Reforms to Ensure Ballot Access During COVID-19 and Beyond

CONCORD - Today, the Senate passed HB 1672-FN as amended, the Coronavirus Election Protection Act of 2020, in a vote of 14-10. The bill, passed earlier this month by the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee, is an omnibus piece of legislation aimed at modernizing New Hampshire's elections. HB 1672-FN next goes to the House of Representatives for a concurrence vote, which requires a simple majority.

After the vote, Senator Melanie Levesque (D-Brookline), issued the following statement:

"In New Hampshire, we see voting as more than a right, it is our civic duty. As we approach September's primary elections, we have needed to consider both the short and long term impacts of the coronavirus on our election system.

Many of the issues brought to light by the public health and safety needs -- limiting physical time at a polling location and creating more options for early or remote voting -- can be addressed through modernizing our current systems. Instituting the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), online voter registration, and no excuse absentee ballots, are the first steps towards ensuring every eligible voter is able to freely participate in this election cycle, and every election cycle hereafter."

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On Background:

- HB 1672 includes text from the following bills:
 - SB 631 *authorizing online voter registration*
 - SB 695 *relative to sharing voter registration information*
 - HB 1672 *allowing voters to vote by absentee ballot*
 - HB 556 *allowing municipalities to process absentee ballots prior to election day*