

Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee

Cameron Lapine 271-2104

HB 186, repealing certain inactive committees and revising the membership or duties of certain committees, councils, and boards.

Hearing Date: April 21, 2021

Time Opened: 10:15 a.m.

Time Closed: 10:36 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Reagan, Ricciardi, Cavanaugh and Prentiss

Members of the Committee Absent: Senator Carson

Bill Analysis: This bill repeals certain inactive committees and revises the membership and duties of others.

Sponsors:

Rep. Ebel

Rep. Heath

Sen. Rosenwald

Sen. Carson

Who supports the bill: Tyler Brannen (Insurance Department), Representative Vanessa Sheehan (Hillsborough – District 23), Eric Pauer, Representative Greg Hill (Merrimack – District 3), Robin Vogt, Michelle Heaton (Insurance Department), Marty Mobley (Insurance Department), Senator Cindy Rosenwald (District 13), and Representative Carol McGuire (Merrimack – District 29).

Who opposes the bill: Representative Paul Bergeron (Hillsborough – District 29), Paul Sanderson (NH Fish and Game), and Brian Nelson Burford (New Hampshire State Archivist).

Who is neutral on the bill: None.

Summary of testimony presented in support:

Representative Karen Ebel

Merrimack – District 5

- Representative Ebel said that HB 186 seeks to repeal some inactive statutory committees and commissions and revises the duties and membership of some other statutory committees and commissions.
- Rep. Ebel said that HB 186 was unanimous out of House Legislative Administration and passed the House on the consent calendar.
- Rep. Ebel said that HB 186 came out of two years of work by two “Committee on Committees” and House Committee Services.

- Rep. Ebel said that she was appointed Deputy Speaker in 2019 and was tasked with making appointments for House members; she was shocked to learn that there are 300 appointments for House members to 250 different committees and commissions. She said that they worked with House Committee Services to make a comprehensive list of all committees and commission, the frequency at which they met, their duties, etc.
- Rep. Ebel said that a Committee on Committees was created in HB 4 (2019) and looked at both statutory committees and Executive Order committees.
- Rep. Ebel said that the HB 4 (2019) Committee on Committees could not complete their work and recommended a new Committee on Committees be formed in HB 1245 (2020) and recommended the repeal of several more committees and commissions.
- Rep. Ebel said that the Committee on Committees worked with every agency and department to discuss their statutory committees and commissions and the need for their continued existence. She said that the administrative charge of the Committee on Committees was to make no substantive changes and, instead, look to see if the committees were still meeting the purposes for which they were needed.
- Rep. Ebel said that the first Committee on Committees process began in 2010 with legislation from Representatives Neal Kurk and Laurie Harding. She said it had been a decade since statutory committees and commissions were last reviewed. She said that some of the recommendations from the original Committee on Committees were how to better use statutory committees and commissions and included having House Legislative Administration review an updated list of statutory committees and commissions every few years, ensuring that statutory committee and commission reports are sent to the chair of the relevant policy committee, and making reporting requirements for statutory committees and commissions clearer.
- Rep. Ebel said that the Committee on Committees recommended the repeal of the State Historical Records Advisory Board after conferring the Deputy Secretary of State David Scanlon. She said that if the Committee wanted to keep the Board in place, it was within the purview of the Committee to do so.
- Rep. Ebel said that the Committee on Committees had one recommendation that was missed in the report, which was to amend the membership of the County-State Finance Commission to have one Representative from the House Municipal and County Government Committee and one from the House Finance Committee.
- Senator Reagan asked for clarity on the State Historical Records Advisory Board.
 - Rep. Ebel said that she expected there to be testimony from the State Archivist regarding the State Historical Records Advisory Board. She said that her other comment was regarding the County-State Finance Commission. She said that the original desire was to repeal the County-State Finance Commission but the Department of Health and Human Services wanted to keep it in place.
- Senator Reagan asked Rep. Ebel to prepare an amendment and present it to the Committee. He said that the Committee would not take executive action on HB 186.
- Speaking for a second time, Rep. Ebel said that the changes Rep. Sheehan referenced were already in HB 186 as amended by the House.
- Senator Reagan asked Rep. Ebel to make her amendment clear.
 - Rep. Ebel said that her amendment would remove the repeal of the State Historical Records Advisory Board and include the Committee on Committees' recommendation on the membership of the County-State Finance Commission.

Representative Vanessa Sheehan

Hillsborough – District 23

- Representative Sheehan said that House Legislative Administration made three changes to HB 186:
 - Deleted Section 5 on the Legislative Youth Advisory Council, as House Executive Departments and Administration has retained HB 457;
 - Amended Section 8 to require a majority of the Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries to be from the Seacoast Region, while the original bill deleted any residency requirement; and
 - Deleted references to the Joint Healthcare Reform Oversight Committee, as it was obsolete and had met its mandate.
- Senator Reagan asked Representative Sheehan to send a copy of the amendment to the Committee.

Representative Greg Hill

Merrimack – District 3

- Representative Hill said that he had been contacted after the House hearing on HB 186 by the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, Shawn Jasper, who expressed an interest in removing the Weights and Measures Advisory Board.
- Rep. Hill said that it did not feel right to remove the Weights and Measures Advisory Board in a floor amendment and suggested that the Committee adopt an amendment.
- Rep. Hill suggested that the Weights and Measures Advisory Board amendment be added to Rep. Ebel's amendment.

Tyler Brannen

NH Insurance Department

- Mr. Brannen expressed support for the changes to committees and commissions in HB 186 that relate to the Insurance Department. He said that those committees and commissions are perfect examples of committees made ten years ago that are now unnecessary.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition:

Representative Paul Bergeron

Hillsborough – District 29

- Representative Bergeron said that the State Historical Records Advisory Board is a state-level review body for grants to the National Archives Grant Fund, of which there is one for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. He said that the State Historical Records Advisory Board has not met in several years because there have been no grants in the last several years.
- Rep. Bergeron said that the State Historical Records Advisory Board has discussed \$1.4 million for various projects, including the publication of the papers of Daniel Webster.
- Senator Reagan said that Rep. Ebel would remove the removal of the State Historical Records Advisory Board in her amendment.

Paul Sanderson

NH Fish and Game Department

- Mr. Sanderson said that he opposes the amendment from House Legislative Administration on the Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries.
- Mr. Sanderson said that he had spoken to House Legislative Administration about the original bill, as it would have repealed all residency requirements for the Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries, and they changed it to needing a majority of members to be from the Seacoast Region.
- Mr. Sanderson said that the Fish and Game Commission asked him to express the view that the current law should remain unchanged.
- Mr. Sanderson said that he agrees that Rep. Ebel worked hard on HB 186 but disagrees on the residency issue. He said that Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries represents an industry rather than a resource and believes that the residency requirement lets them address the industry better. He said that it would be a change in the entire scheme of the Advisory Council on Marine Fisheries.
- Senator Reagan urged Mr. Sanderson to work with Rep. Ebel on her amendment and discuss the residency requirement.

Brian Nelson Burford

NH State Archivist

- Mr. Burford said that he opposed HB 186 because of the repeal of the State Historical Records Advisory Board.
- Senator Reagan said that issue over the State Historical Records Advisory Board would be resolved in Rep. Ebel's amendment.

Neutral Information Presented: None.

cml

Date Hearing Report completed: April 22, 2021