

## **Lest We Forget**

As November's Election Day approaches, Governor Sununu is still marketing himself as an affable moderate. He wants us to forget that he's been in cahoots with anti-government Free State Project radicals for years. In 2019 and 2020, the Democratic majority in the State Legislature passed dozens of bills to support workers, families, children, and vulnerable adults, but as a gift to the FSP-led Republican minority, he vetoed over 60 of them and was caught on video later, bragging about it to his country club friends.

In the fall of 2020, there were memorial services for the fallen bills at a Veto Graveyard at the State House and city and town halls throughout New Hampshire. I was honored to write eulogies for them. A small sample illustrates the cruelty of what was done by the Governor and the FSP Republicans:

**Here lies HB 365**, child of our 2019 legislature, beloved by young and old alike. HB 365, known to its friends as Net Metering, would have allowed the citizens of NH to produce and benefit from more clean energy. Passed into law by the legislature by a vote of 254-98 on 5/15/2019. Killed by the Governor at the behest of his fossil fuel industry donors and friends on 6/3/2019.

[Update: Net Metering expansion was revived when the Governor signed HB315 and SB91 into law. Loved ones hope that President Biden and Congress's Bi-partisan Infrastructure Act will heal the environmental damage done by the delay, but are very mindful of the fact that Free Staters are against accepting federal dollars for any reason. They proved this when they tried to reject COVID assistance at the height of the pandemic.]

**Here lies HB 696**, child of our 2019 legislature, beloved by all who care for the well-being of older adults. HB 696 established a mechanism to protect vulnerable elders from exploitation and violence. Passed into law by the House 219-156 and the Senate 13-10 on 6/27/2019. Killed by the Governor on 7/19/2019.

**Here lies HB 109**, child of our 2019 legislature, beloved by all who have advocated for years for gun safety measures, including a majority of gun owners. HB 109 established a requirement of background checks for commercial firearms sales. Passed into law by the House 213-148 and the Senate 13-10 on 6/27/2019. Killed by the Governor on 8/9/2019.

**Here lies HB 504**, child of our 2019 legislature, beloved by all who strive to end the corrupting influence of money and influence in government. HB 504 recommended that the US Congress and state legislatures amend their constitutions to prevent such corruption. Passed into law by the Senate on 6/6/19 by a vote of 14-10. Killed by the Governor on 7/10/2019.

**Here lies SB1**, child of our 2019 legislature, known to its friends as Paid Family/Medical Leave. SB1 was beloved by all who want to bond with their newborn children and take care of loved ones in times of need without losing their jobs. Passed into law by the House 219-142 and the Senate by 13-10 on 4/4/19. Killed by the Governor on 5/9/2019.

**Here lies HB 712**, beloved younger sibling to SB1, child of our 2020 legislature. HB 712 also sought to establish a Paid Family/Medical leave program to help retain workforce and allow families to care for loved ones. Passed into law by the House 215-141 and the Senate 14-10 on 6/6/2020. Killed by the Governor, even as COVID19 was sweeping through the country, on 7/10/2020.

**Here lies HB 1246**, child of our 2020 legislature, beloved by all who care for the health and safety of residents of long-term care facilities. HB1246 sought to establish a COVID19 long-term care fund, establish procedures to ensure the safety of residents, and fund training of nursing assistants to address a critical shortage of health care workers. Passed into law by the House 194-132 and the Senate 14-10 on 6/30/2020. Killed by the Governor, after COVID19 had already claimed the lives of many older residents, on 7/17/2020.

**Here lies HB 731**, child of our 2020 legislature. This bill, dearly beloved by all working people, especially those in essential service jobs, and the families who depend on them, established a minimum wage of \$12/hour by the year 2023. As NH currently has no minimum wage, so reverts to the federal minimum of \$7.25, the death of this bill leaves our workers bereft. Passed by the House 212-155 and the Senate 14-10 on 6/30/2020. Killed by the Governor on 7/24/2020.

**Here lies HB 1166**, child of our 2020 legislature. Loved and mourned by New Hampshire's families and workers, this bill extended federal COVID19 family and medical leave, waived cost sharing for testing and treatment, extended unemployment insurance, and established sanitary protections for COVID19. Passed by the House 178-154 and the Senate 14-10 on 6/30/2020. Killed by the Governor on 7/17/2020.

**Here lies HB 1247**, child of our 2020 legislature, beloved by everyone who rents a home or owns a mortgage. HB 1247 established a duty of good faith for mortgage lenders and prevented eviction for non-payment of rent during the COVID19 state of emergency. Passed into law by the House 188-108 and the Senate 14-10 on 6/30/2020. Killed by the Governor on 7/10/2020.

**Here lies HB 1665**, child of our 2020 legislature, beloved by all who cherish fairness, integrity, and transparency in government. HB 1665 would have established an independent redistricting advisory commission to prevent partisan gerrymandering in 2021. Passed into law by the

House of Representatives on 3/12/2020 by a vote of 203-121; and the Senate on 6/29/2020 by a vote of 15-9. Killed by the Governor on 7/31/2020.

[Update: the Governor said at the time of this veto that he “trusted the legislative process.” A couple of months ago, he vetoed a redistricting bill passed by the 2022 Legislature. His inconsistent messages on this and many other important issues should make us question both his competence and motives.]

New Hampshire deserves so much better, and fortunately, we have the opportunity to elect a Governor who will be consistently principled, hard-working, and truly representative of the good people of NH: Democratic Sen. Tom Sherman. Dr. Sherman voted with the majority for all the legislation killed in the 2020 veto rampage. His voting record, both as a Representative and as Senator, shows his consistent commitment to children, families, workers, access to affordable health care, public health, reproductive freedom, a healthy environment, and democracy. All these values and priorities are on the line in November’s election. Voters can find out more details on Sen. Sherman’s campaign website, but we also can—and should—dig deeper. Non-partisan sites like [justfacts.votesmart.org](https://justfacts.votesmart.org) have well-organized and easy-to-navigate information about candidates and officials so we can compare and contrast their biographies, public positions on important issues, and voting records. It is very clear that Sen. Sherman represents the best of New Hampshire values and has earned the right to serve as Governor.