

## Joseph Kenney's View From Concord – November

Joseph D. Kenney

Executive Councilor, District 1

The Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) provides input into the Ten-Year Highway Improvement Plan. Also, the Executive Council votes to accept and expend all federal transportation funds.

GACIT has conducted 22 statewide public hearings to receive input on the Ten-Year Highway Improvement Plan. In December 2021, GACIT will provide its recommendations to the Governor who will in turn assign it over to the New Hampshire Legislature for its input and review. After the House and Senate passes the Ten-Year Highway Improvement Plan, the Governor will sign it into law by June 2022.

There has been a lot of news surrounding the new federal infrastructure five-year plan called the Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA). New Hampshire is programmed to receive \$1.139 billion for its highway programs. Even so, this highway programming amount remains the lowest nationally for a state. Moreover, New Hampshire will be confronted with a revenue shortfall in its road tolls, Betterment, and SB367 programs. But the IIJA federal funding will help to advance many projects.

One of the bright funding sources will be the bridge program category. This IIJA funding amount is \$225 million (m) to address state and town red-listed bridges. The strategy is to use 15% of the bridge fund to support the municipal bridge aid program (\$6.75 m/year). Allocate the remaining \$38 m/year bridge funds to existing state bridge projects to free up funds with greater spending flexibility. The municipal red-listed bridges are over 200, and the state red-listed bridges are over 100. It is the intent to lower the state red-listed bridges from its current amount of 118 to 88 during this ten-year period.

One of the other strategies is to in-

crease the following mandated programs by 24%: HSIP, TAP, CMAQ, Rec Trails, etc. (\$8.3 m). These are popular programs that each District Councilor has a lot of say in. It is the intent to alternate the TAP and CMAQ from

year to year. Other funds will support administrative project changes, project increases, and recommended changes.

Additional transportation IIJA categories include Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (\$17.3 m), Public Transportation (\$131 m), and Airports (\$45.6 m). Other infrastructure items include Broadband (\$100 m), Wildfires (\$5.6 m), Cyber Security (\$12.4 m) and Water (\$418 m).

GACIT public hearing comments brought out the need to expand travel options, improve safety, maintenance of the present system, congestion reduction, and enhance system resiliency. In these hearings, it has become clear there is going to be a reduction in state revenue for unrestricted road tolls, Betterment, and SB367 funds in the coming years. The TIFIA financing for I-93 will start to take out \$23.4 m/year starting in 2026 for nine years.

The New Hampshire Legislature will be forced to look at future gas tax revenues and how it will support our paving and maintenance programs

Additionally, the New Hampshire Legislature will be looking at policy issues such as: how does the state tax electric vehicles on our roadways, the reduction in gas tax revenue (due to more workers working from home), state workforce issues, material costs, contracted labor, safety, and transit issues.

I will always do my best to advocate for District 1, and I look forward to hearing from you at 603 581-8780.

## Louise Andrus' View From Concord – November

Louise Andrus, State Representative

I came across a bit of history I would like to share with you. Recently I found a copy of *The Andover Star* which I used to subscribe to. The publisher was Julie Palmer Mayo and the dates of pub-

were unenrolled from the Merrimack Valley School District between of July 1 and September 15.

In my opinion, until we all sit down (school board, superintendent, teachers, parents) as adults and listen to each other and choose to correct any problems, our public schools will continue to see parents opt to enroll their child for an alternative education.

As for masks, again this is my opinion. I am not against masks nor am I for masks. Adults in public and children in school should not be forced and mandated to wear a mask. As for attending school, the decision to wear a mask is a parental decision for their child. As for an adult in public, each individual should make their own decision whether or not to wear a mask. No government should be making these decisions.

No government in my opinion has the right to mandate the current vaccines. Each person has the right to make a decision for their body whether or not they want to receive any one of the COVID-19 vaccines. That is each individual's decision and that decision belongs to no one else.

It is sad and disgusting what we are doing to people in that they are losing their jobs, yet they spent their time a year ago taking care of the sick people, and now we are turning our backs on them because they do not want a vaccine. Who have we evolved into as a people?

I hope you are gearing up to participate in the 2022 House Sessions and Committee Hearings on bills which start in January. If you go to the New Hampshire General Court website you can find the bills vetoed by the Governor and Retained House Bills that will be brought up in January. This is your State and your input is valuable and wanted and needed.

It's hard to believe we are almost at the end of 2021. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Let us all hope and pray that 2022 will be a better year for all of us.

# OPINIONS

lication were from September 1988 and ended in November 1990. Do you remember this Andover newspaper?

Did you realize that New Hampshire has a law requiring the teaching of the Pledge of Allegiance and the Star Spangled Banner in our Public Schools?

New Hampshire Law: Title XV, Chapter 189 states: 189:18 Patriotic Exercises. – In all public schools of the state one session, or a portion thereof, during the weeks in which Memorial Day and Veterans Day fall, shall be devoted to exercises of a patriotic nature, which shall include a discussion of the words, meaning, and history of the Pledge of Allegiance and the Star Spangled Banner.

On other subjects, I was asked "did I support public schools" and my position on "masks," and my position on "vaccines." Each one of us has a right to our opinion; the following are my opinions:

I do support public schools but I also "totally support School Choice." When it comes to a child's education, one size does not fit all. The choice of where a child goes to school, whether it be public, charter, private, religious, or home schooling is the decision of the parent(s). That decision belongs to no one else but the parent(s).

There is a subject that I have heard no school board, superintendent, teachers, and parents discuss together in a public meeting. That subject is why are parents pulling their child from public school and enrolling them in alternative education? This year alone, 38 students



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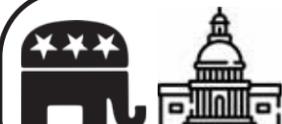
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