

# The Influence Gap: Political Participation in the Granite State

## Voting and Campaigns

- ▶ NH voter turnout in national general elections rose in the early 2000s before declining slightly after 2008 to 44.3% in the 2010 midterm and 67.8% in the 2012 general.
- ▶ NH voter turnout in national and state primary elections was 30% and 19% in 2012, respectively, compared to 52% and 12% in 2008, respectively; only one in seven NH citizens went to the polls to vote in the local elections of 2013 across the state's five largest cities.
- ▶ Spending in NH elections increased dramatically from \$22.5 million in 2010 to an estimated \$106 million in 2014, with fewer than 2% of NH citizens donating in 2015; 591 Granite States (0.06% of the population) gave a majority of the campaign money in amounts of \$1,000 or more.
- ▶ Private campaign donations totaled \$30 million for 2000-2012 (excl. candidate self-funding and party transfers) with nearly two-thirds coming from business, one-fifth from labor, 1.3% from unitemized small donations, and 0.1% from low-income advocates.

## Lobbying State Government

- ▶ 811 lobbyists were registered by clients to engage state lawmakers on public policy matters in 2013. Business accounted for approximately 86% of total lobbying expenditures, compared to 11% for non-profits and labor combined and 3% for the public sector.
- ▶ The top ten private sector lobbyists provided more money in campaign contributions, \$52,500, than all remaining lobbyists combined in 2013.
- ▶ Business donations and lobbyists outnumbered low-income donations and lobbyists by a factor of more than 400:1 and 19:1, respectively, in 2012.
- ▶ NH ranks 48th out of 50 states in the level of lobbying disclosure required by law.

## Civic and Community Engagement

- ▶ The rate of citizen engagement in all forms of civic and community volunteering declined 26% from 2004-2010 to 31% of adults, while the number of volunteer hours per capita fell by 18%. Rates and hours of volunteering held steady or increased in MA, ME, and VT.
- ▶ Between 10-20% of NH adults report contacting a public official, boycotting a product or service, and joining a school, community, or civic organization - 15% less than neighboring states on average. 36% of adults often discuss politics, 2% more than MA, ME, and VT.
- ▶ Civic and political engagement in NH and other states is highly correlated to income and education: 9% of citizens without a HS diploma volunteer in some capacity, compared to 17% of HS graduates, 29% of people with some post-secondary education, and 42% of people with a BA nationwide (state-level data unavailable).

Sources: UNH Carsey School of Public Policy, US Census Bureau, NH Secretary of State, NH Fiscal Policy Institute, National Institute of Money in State Politics, Center for Public Integrity; \*Year-end data incomplete for 163 of 811 reports

Fig. 1: NH Campaign Spending and Turnout, 2008-12

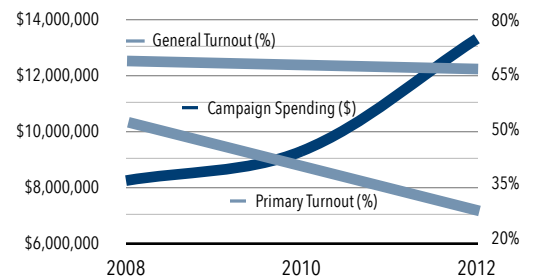


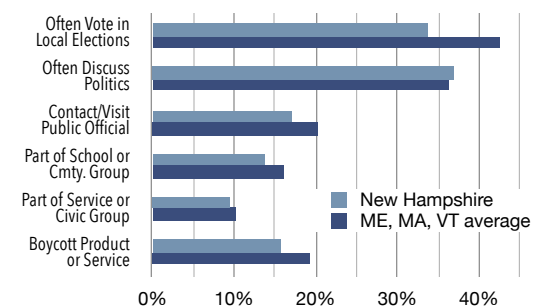
Fig. 2: NH Campaign Donations, 2000-2012



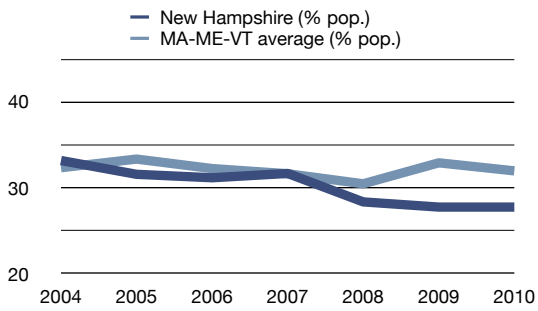
Fig. 3: NH Lobbying Expenditures, 2014



Fig. 4: Forms of Participation in NH and Neighbors, 2012



### Rate of Civic/Political Engagement, 2004-2011



### Rate & Hours of Volunteer Engagement, 2004-2010

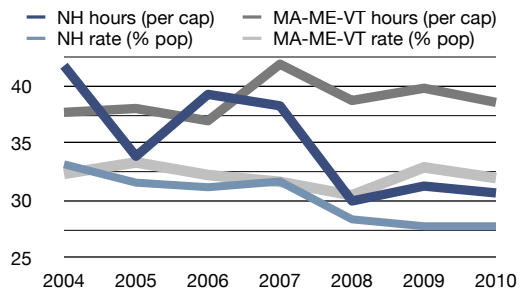
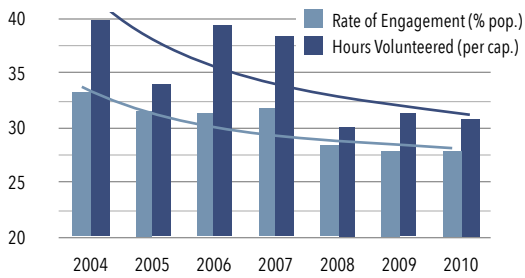


Fig. 3: Civic and Political Engagement in NH, 2004-2010



Sources: UNH Carsey School of Public Policy, US Census Bureau, NH Secretary of State, NH Fiscal Policy Institute, National Institute of Money in State Politics, Center for Public Integrity; \*Year-end data incomplete for 163 of 811 reports