

# REBECCA PERKINS KWOKA STATE SENATE

Hi everyone,

The start of February marks the beginning of Black History Month, honoring the immense impact Black Americans have had on our country. To celebrate this month, I will be sharing ways you can support Black-owned businesses throughout the Seacoast. Feel free to send me some of your favorite spots!

Last week, Phase 1B of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution began. Those eligible, along with folks awaiting their second dose, should have received a registration email to sign up for an appointment. If you are experiencing trouble registering, check out this [step-by-step guide](#) or call the 211 hotline.

Committee meetings are also officially underway and I will be serving on the Energy and Natural Resources and Election Law and Municipal Affairs committees this session. Here are some highlights of what I have been working on so far:

- **No-Excuse Absentee Ballot Voting** — Last Monday, the Election Law and Municipal Affairs committee held a hearing on [SB 47, a bill](#)

that I am co-sponsoring that would make no-excuse absentee registration and voting permanent. We had record turnout for the November 2020 election, and enacting this policy would be a key step toward making our elections more accessible for all. We also discussed SB 54, which would require mailing a copy of a drivers' license with an absentee ballot. I advocated against this bill, and will continue to do so, as it would disenfranchise many who need absentee voting, especially those with disabilities who face enough challenge when voting.

- **Fair, Transparent, and Nonpartisan Redistricting** — One of the most important issues I'll be working on this session is independent redistricting. Senator Tom Sherman and I worked closely together on SB 80, which would've established an independent redistricting commission. This bill, however, was blocked yesterday along party lines. I am disappointed that my Republican colleagues failed to put aside partisan politics and unite in a renewed commitment to strengthen our democracy. I will continue to fight for a fair, transparent, and nonpartisan redistricting process, starting with my omnibus bill, SB 90, that would make redistricting meetings and maps public, and ensure that taxpayer dollars used for redistricting are available to both political parties.
- **Workplace Lactation Bill:** Senator Whitley and I are co-sponsoring legislation, SB 69, to accommodate nursing moms in the workplace. The Senate Commerce committee unanimously passed our bill last week and I look forward to working with the rest of my Senate colleagues to pass it out of our chamber.

On the House side, tomorrow is a consequential day for transgender rights in NH. The Family Law & Committee will be considering HB 68, which aims to define gender affirming healthcare for those under 18 as child abuse. This bill is blatantly unjust and discriminatory and I urge you to visit <http://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/remotetestimony/default.aspx> to oppose it.

As we shovel ourselves out from yesterday's storm, I hope you all are keeping warm and still finding ways to enjoy the outdoors. Logan certainly relished the chance to go on mini sled rides this weekend!



Stay safe and best wishes,  
Rebecca

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