

REBECCA PERKINS  
**KWOKA**  
**STATE SENATE**

Hi everyone,

I hope that you all are having a wonderful summer so far. While we may now be out of session, there is still plenty of work going on throughout our state, including some exciting news—two of my bills got signed into law! The first bill, SB 46, will enable the use of electronic poll books, which will shorten wait times and help out our hardworking poll staff. Perfect timing with 2022 approaching. And the other, SB 126, helps give struggling renters more time to pay, in turn protecting landlords' incomes and helping to ensure situations don't reach a crisis point. The New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute recently released data that showed that prior to the pandemic, nearly half of all renter households paid more than 30 percent of their income on rent and utilities. This reality has only been exacerbated over the last 17 months. Having relief like more time to make rent helps provide short-term guardrails as we work long-term to address our lack of affordable housing stock. While these two bills are certainly major silver linings,

we are unfortunately already seeing the direct effects of total GOP control this session. The redistricting committee met at the end of June to kick things off—months before any census data will be available. And to make matters worse, there was audio trouble and the public link was taken down twice during the meeting, with the Chair ending the session without committing to public access for the next one. When I introduced legislation this session to make redistricting more fair and transparent, and meetings more accessible, I was told we did not need it. This now seems to be far from the case.

We've also learned that [just 41% of NH restaurants](#) are receiving revitalization funds, totaling \$90 million in aid from the American Rescue Plan. This support is crucial and made possible thanks to President Biden and our Congressional Delegation. But in order to ensure struggling small businesses don't fall through the cracks, we need to pair federal relief with state aid. That's why I introduced SB 107 in February to include new small businesses in Main Street funding, but the GOP ultimately cut this provision from the final budget.

The budget that was passed, as we've already discussed, included many other provisions that went against what we value as Granite Staters. Among them was the ban on teaching "divisive topics." In response to its passage, 10 members of the Governor's Council on Diversity and Inclusion (GACDI) resigned. I'm proud of the stance that they took against this senseless bill. In order to create the open, inclusive, and safe place we know NH can be, we can't silence the experience of our most marginalized communities.

## Events & Resources

**First Lady Jill Biden's Visit to Portsmouth:** It was great to welcome First Lady Jill Biden to Portsmouth earlier this month to celebrate the Fourth! Sounds like her reflections on the past year were a great reminder of how far we've come—together. She even managed to hold off the rain, making her visit all the more enjoyable.

**Child Tax Credit Discussion:** It was great to join Representative Chris Pappas for a discussion on the Child Tax Credit (CTC) expansion. Thanks to our Congressional Delegation's leadership, the CTC will support nearly 200,000 kids across NH—over 75% of children in our district alone. This legislation will go a long way to supporting the next generation of parents, who are critical to our economy and our thriving communities. Hopefully these funds will help all expand access to childcare!

**Municipal Support Application:** Thanks to the hard work of our NH Congressional Delegation, NH will receive \$112 million in funding from the American Rescue Plan to distribute to NH's Non-Entitlement Units (NEUs)—all NH municipalities except Dover, Manchester, Nashua, Portsmouth and Rochester, which receive separate aid as metropolitan cities. NH municipalities must request funds [here](#) by August 18th.

**Emergency Rental Assistance:** Additionally, I want to remind folks that there are emergency funds available to renters in NH through federal rental assistance. For more information on whether you qualify and how to apply, check out the application [here](#). The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has also launched a new tool ([www.consumerfinance.gov/renthelp](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/renthelp)) that allows renters and landlords to find rental assistance

allows renters and landlords to find rental assistance programs in their area. Be sure to pass this information along to any friends or neighbors you think might benefit from it.

## Looking Ahead

Despite legislative setbacks that we continue to fight back against, having had time to reflect on my first Senate session, I still feel proud of the work my colleagues and I accomplished. We did everything that we could, given the partisan circumstances, and I feel confident we'll be able to make substantive progress moving forward. I am also encouraged by the overwhelming bipartisan support my legislation received—from tenant support, to small business relief, to election accessibility. Many of these bills went down to the wire before ultimately being cut in the final budget rounds by House Republicans, but I'm energized to move forward on these goals next session.

I hope you have found ways to enjoy the beautiful summer along the Seacoast. Stealing some beach days with the family has been a treat these past few weeks, and Logan seems to be soaking it up. We also had one of the final ultrasounds this week and our baby is looking healthy—and big! Katelyn and I are so excited to welcome them into the world very soon.







Take Care,  
Rebecca

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