



## GREATER MANCHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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### SPONSOR INSIGHT:

Sponsor's Analysis: Amid the traditional biennial pomp and circumstance, New Hampshire style, Governor John H. Lynch was sworn in for his second term on Thursday. School children led the pledge of allegiance, students from UNH sang the National Anthem, the state poet read one of her poems, and clergy from various denominations and parts of the state invoked God's blessing on the state and its administration. Just after Chief Justice John Broderick administered the oath to him, the Governor administered theirs to the five executive counselors, two of them, Beverly Hollingworth and John Shea, newly elected Democrats. No matter how many times someone has seen an inauguration in person, it is a moving tribute to democracy and our governmental system.

Lynch then gave his inaugural address. He noted that "We are again entrusted with great responsibility as stewards of our great state..." to strengthen and preserve it for those who come after us. He thanked his family for their support, recognized the service of those serving in the military overseas, and stated his belief that, "We live in the greatest state in the greatest country in the world."

A Democrat, Lynch spent his first term dealing with Republican majorities in both houses of the legislature. He noted the "historic change in the composition of the legislature," but reminded those present, many of whom were members of the house and senate, "We should not seek Democratic or Republican solutions—but New Hampshire solutions." His pledge to work with all continued his theme of unity and consensus, sounded often in his first term. This term, however, he is the leader of the majority—a different situation from

the one he faced two years ago.

Turning to issues, he tackled the looming education issue first, saying, “Our future depends on our children, and their future depends on education...Let us assure a quality education for all our children.” The Governor noted the Supreme Court decisions on adequate education and said that politicians often have focused on frustration with the courts or tried to advance a change in the tax system of the state, rather than addressing the needs of education, in the debate. He noted that the people had spoken clearly in the last election and do not want a sales or income tax. He stressed that the state had a clear and important role in funding education, that the legislature should be able to fashion a definition of “adequate education” using present state requirements for education as the starting point, and noted that to enable the state to come up with a targeted aid program that would help communities unable to pay for education, a “narrow constitutional amendment” probably would be needed—but not one that takes the courts out of the process or is an excuse for the state to abandon its responsibility.

Turning to another education issue, he again called for raising the mandatory school attendance age to 18—from the present 16 that was put into law in 1903. He noted that various non-traditional education programs should be funded to give alternatives to those who presently drop out of school, if they are to be required to stay—and pledged to include funding for them in his up-coming budget.

Lynch called for aid to college students so our young people will stay in New Hampshire, to in turn provide the trained workforce required to attract business here, and for funds to train present workers and those on welfare to become the skilled workers businesses require. Transportation and child care programs are also needed to enable that training, and they will be proposed, he said.

Noting that New Hampshire has a strong economy now, he called for the enactment of an investment tax credit to act as an incentive for development of new ideas, technology and products—something supported by the Chamber of Commerce and other business groups during the last legislative session.

On environmental subjects, Governor Lynch called for programs to ensure that “Twenty-five per cent of New Hampshire's energy come from renewable sources by the year 2025,” noting this would put the

state in the forefront of energy policy. He called for protecting ground water, funding the LCHIP program to preserve historic and open properties, banning the burning of construction and demolition debris—making the current moratorium permanent, and “protecting our state parks for the future.” Assumedly, specific proposals will be forthcoming on these matters, some of which may cause certain segments of the business community concern.

Lynch stated that the state can make healthcare better, should encourage the provision of health insurance to all the state's children and as many adults as possible, so the emergency rooms of hospitals not be the only and most expensive option available. He called for programs to help senior citizens stay in their own homes, and for Medicaid reform that was “thoughtful and compassionate...not arbitrary rules or making it hard to get on Medicaid, but by providing needed community services.” Some thought this might have been a negative reference to HHS Commissioner John Stephens' efforts—although his name and proposals were not mentioned.

Citing the murder of Manchester Police Officer Michael Briggs last year, Lynch promised a “Crime Commission” to study criminal laws and bring them into the 21 st Century—including new laws aimed at those using the internet to harm children.

The Governor also promised that a “responsible, balanced budget” would be submitted to the legislature in February. This coupled with the proposals he outlined broadly and the revenue sources he said the people had taken off the table, left more than one observer noting the challenge of paying for the proposals along with current services. The Governor never mentioned gambling as a revenue option, positively or negatively.

Those in attendance gave the speech high marks for style and content. With it, the ceremonial beginnings of the biennium are over (except for a couple of balls), the office holders have been installed, the newly selected members of the Democratic leadership of the legislature have begun to work, and legislators are waiting to “sign off” on the many bills they have requested be drafted. Those bills address all of the matters the Governor mentioned in the speech—and many more. Tax issues, gambling proposals, gay marriage, civil unions, repeal of parental notification of abortion, amending the newly enacted and confusing lobbying law and the new healthcare proxy legislation, changing election laws, and many, many more subjects

will face the legislators in addition to the traditional budget issues encountered during the first session of the two-year term.

Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green and Sheehan Phinney Capitol Group are pleased to sponsor this electronic publication of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce again in 2007, and look forward to helping to be your eyes and ears in Concord. Please feel free to contact any of the people listed below if you want more information on any subject or piece of legislation mentioned.

#### CHAMBER INSIGHT:

Welcome to the 2007 edition of *Capitol Insight*! As we embark into the New Year the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce is pleased to provide you with this legislative newsletter. As the largest business organization in the state, the Chamber is proud to represent and protect your businesses interests at the State House. We feel the key to providing you with the best representation in Concord is **communication**. That's where *Capitol Insight* comes in. Each week this newsletter will arrive in your inboxes full of information on legislation that impacts your business and New Hampshire's overall business climate.

*Capitol Insight* is divided in two segments each week. "Sponsors Insight" provides an in-depth recap of the major issues and legislation being debated at the State House that week. The government affairs experts of Sheehan Phinney Capitol Group author this section. The Chamber would like to thank Sheehan Phinney Bass + Green for their time, effort, and generosity in underwriting *Capitol Insight*. The section known as "Chamber Insight" provides updates on the Chamber's perspective on current legislative issues and how the Government Affairs Committee is addressing these issues. As some of you may know, the Chamber's Economic Development and Advocacy Department is home to a permanent Government Affairs Committee that meets regularly to monitor business issues at the State House.

This week marks the beginning of a historic session in Concord. Newly elected and re-elected Democratic legislators now hold a majority in the House, Senate, and Executive Council along with Democratic Governor John Lynch. The question on many of our minds is, "What does this new majority mean for the 2007 legislative agenda?" With over 1200 bills filed, it's clear the legislature intends to

address a lot of issues this session. The Chamber's Government Affairs Committee has already begun to formulate its 2007 policy goals and aggressively review and monitor proposed legislation.

Some areas of focus for 2007 include:

- Expanding commuter rail into Southern NH. Governor Lynch has identified rail as a priority and formed a taskforce to address the issue. Legislation is being formulated to aid this project in moving forward.
- Continuing to advocate for the adoption of new building codes at the state level. These new codes, known as the International Existing Building Code, will aid the redevelopment of older structures, such as Manchester's many mill buildings.

The Chamber will continue to promote its perennial objectives of:

- Fighting against attempts to raise business taxes.
- Protecting our "New Hampshire Advantage" of no sales or income tax.
- Continuing to fight for policies that promote affordable healthcare for business owners and their employees.

As we move deeper into this session and legislative language becomes available to the public, we will provide information on these and additional issues that the Chamber will be monitoring and taking positions on. The Government Affairs Committee will be hard at work over the next month finalizing the Chamber's 2007 legislative policy goals. *Capitol Insight* will be sure to bring that information to you in the coming weeks.

In closing, I mentioned earlier that an integral part of the Chamber representing your business is good communication. Good communication, however, is not a "one way street" of just the Chamber keeping you informed of what's going on. We need to hear from you regarding the issues you feel are important and how we can best represent your interests. Please feel free to contact me with your views on what issues the Chamber should be monitoring, supporting, or opposing at the State House.

Best,

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**EYE ON POLITICS:** 

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NH State Legislature [www.state.nh.us](http://www.state.nh.us)

The Union Leader [www.theunionleader.com/primaryindex.html](http://www.theunionleader.com/primaryindex.html)

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