

COMPREHENSIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND POLICE REFORM PASSES HOUSE

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Today, the New Hampshire House passed HB 705 and HB 1645, comprehensive legislation with bipartisan sponsorship that supports victims of sexual assault and crime, as well as makes changes to bail statute at the recommendation of a non-partisan stakeholder commission on bail. Chair of the House Criminal Justice and Public Safety Commission, **Representative Renny Cushing (D-Hampton)** released the following statement:

“Hearing the testimony of crime victims is some of the most harrowing work that we do as legislators. The suffering victims endure is not limited to the moment of the crime, but rather often persist for a lifetime. Processing such heinous acts of assault does not follow a uniform timeline and the psychological impacts alone can take years to overcome. HB 705 is a direct result of the needs victims in this state have voiced for years. Removing the civil statute of limitations for sexual assault is critical to allowing victims the support to be heard and it is about time that the legislature shows allyship to victims in this way.”

“The reforms in HB 1645 come as an expansion of the ground-breaking bail reform this legislature passed in 2018. HB 1645 is the result of the tireless work of the statewide bail commission, including the public defender’s office serving our most vulnerable populations. Importantly, too, this bill will prohibit the use of chokeholds by law enforcement officers in New Hampshire, require law enforcement officers to report misconduct by other officers, and establish a fund to ensure all law enforcement officers in the state undergo psychological stability screening. New Hampshire is not innocent of the implicit bias and racial prejudice that has infected our nation since its inception. These reforms are merely the beginning of a larger conversation on violence and racial equity in our state and I am proud to support them.”

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Dan Mason
House of Representatives