

CHAPTER 4  
HB 266 - FINAL VERSION

7Jan2026... 2998h  
02/19/2026 0719s  
02/19/2026 0720s

2026 SESSION

25-0526  
06/11

HOUSE BILL                    **266**

AN ACT                    relative to structural changes to the department of energy and creating a limited exemption from parental consent required for certain recordings under the parental bill of rights and relative to the effect of murder on a decedent's estate.

SPONSORS:                Rep. Harrington, Straf. 18; Rep. Notter, Hills. 12; Rep. Summers, Rock. 20

COMMITTEE:              Executive Departments and Administration

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AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill:

- I. Ensures the department's full party status in proceedings before the public utilities commission.
- II. Requires the department to support the public utilities commission, site evaluation committee, office of the consumer advocate, and any related entities.
- III. Allows the department to demand documents and specific answers from public utilities or related entities.
- IV. Creates a limited exemption from the consent requirement under the parental bill of rights for required assessments and school-sponsored events open to the general public.
- V. Makes the final criminal conviction for murder, which is defined, the threshold for conclusive establishment of criminal responsibility for the commission of a murder, with respect to the murder's effect on the decedent's estate.

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Explanation:            Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
                                 Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struckthrough.~~]  
                                 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Six*

AN ACT relative to structural changes to the department of energy and creating a limited exemption from parental consent required for certain recordings under the parental bill of rights and relative to the effect of murder on a decedent's estate.

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1 4:1 Establishment; Purpose. Amend RSA 12-P:2, IV to read as follows:

2 IV. The department shall have the authority to investigate any matter ***related to the statutes it***  
3 ***administers or*** that may come before the public utilities commission and to appear before the commission  
4 to advocate for the department's position and for the purposes of providing a [complete] record for  
5 consideration by the commission ***as determined by the department.***

6 4:2 Department of Energy; General Provisions. Amend RSA 12-P:3, III to read as follows:

7 III. The department shall have the authority to petition for any proceeding before the public  
8 utilities commission and shall automatically be a party to all proceedings ***and have full party status and***  
9 ***right to appeal in any adjudicative or non-adjudicative proceeding*** before the commission. Any person or  
10 party that initiates a proceeding before the public utilities commission by petition or otherwise shall  
11 provide a copy to the department at the time of filing. Any person or party filing confidential information in  
12 any proceeding in which the department may appear, or exchanging confidential information in discovery  
13 or otherwise, shall provide the department with such confidential information. In adjudicative proceedings  
14 as defined by RSA 541-A:1, I, the public utilities commission and the department shall be subject to RSA  
15 541-A:36.

16 4:3 Department of Energy; Duties of Commissioner. Amend RSA 12-P:5, VII to read as follows:

17 VII. Ensure that the department provides [all-necessary] support ***required by RSA 21-G:10*** to the  
18 public utilities commission, the site evaluation committee, office of the consumer advocate, and any other  
19 entity that is administratively attached to the department.

20 4:4 Department of Energy; Specific Answers. Amend RSA 12-P:10 to read as follows:

21 12-P:10 Specific Answers. The department [or the commission] may require any public utility or  
22 entity subject to its jurisdiction to ***provide documents and other materials and to*** make specific answers to  
23 questions upon which the department [or commission] may need information ***within a time period set by***  
24 ***the department.***

25 4:5 New Paragraph; Parental Bill of Rights; Definitions Added. Amend RSA 189-B:2 by inserting  
26 after paragraph VI the following new paragraphs:

27 VII. "Open to the general public" means an event that is generally open to parents, guardians,  
28 family, and members of the community, including events for which attendance may require registration,  
29 ticketing, or invitation for admission due to space, security, or other concerns.

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1 VIII. "Required assessment" means any standardized assessment that is required by state or  
2 federal statute or regulation.

3 4:6 Parental Rights; Consent to Recording; Limited Exemption for Required Assessments and Events  
4 Open to the General Public. Amend RSA 189-B:4, I(p) to read as follows:

5 (p) To consent in writing before the state or any of its political subdivisions, including, without  
6 limitation, any school pursuant also to the provisions of RSA 189:68, III-V, makes a video or voice  
7 recording, unless such recording is made during or as part of a court proceeding or part of a forensic  
8 interview in a criminal or other investigation by the bureau of child protective services or it is to be used  
9 solely for the purpose of a safety demonstration, including the maintenance of order and discipline in the  
10 common areas of a school or on student transportation vehicles, *or such recording is made as a*  
11 *component of the administration of a required assessment or is made during a school-sponsored event*  
12 *that is open to the general public.*

13 4:7 New Paragraph; Effect of Murder on Intestate Succession, Wills, Joint Assets, Life Insurance, and  
14 Beneficiary Designations; Definition Added. Amend RSA 562-A:1 by inserting after paragraph I the  
15 following new paragraph:

16 I-a. "Final criminal conviction" means a judgment of conviction that has become final upon  
17 conclusion of direct appellate review by the New Hampshire supreme court or expiration of the time to  
18 seek such review.

19 4:8 Effect of Murder on Intestate Succession, Wills, Joint Assets, Life Insurance, and Beneficiary  
20 Designations; Murder; How Determined. Amend RSA 562-A:5, I and II to read as follows:

21 I. [~~After all right to appeal has been exhausted~~] *Upon entry of a final criminal conviction*, a  
22 judgment of conviction establishing criminal responsibility for commission of the murder of the decedent  
23 conclusively establishes the convicted individual as the decedent's killer for purposes of this chapter.

24 II. [~~In the absence of~~] *As an alternative to a final* criminal conviction, an individual's status as the  
25 person responsible for commission of the murder of the decedent as defined in this chapter is conclusively  
26 established by a final civil judgment to that effect entered against the individual by a court of competent  
27 jurisdiction.

28 4:9 Repeal. RSA 12-P:2, III, relative to certain duties of the department of energy, is repealed.

29 4:10 Effective Date.

- 30 I. Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 of this act shall take effect upon its passage.  
II. The remainder of this act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: March 03, 2026

Effective Date:

I. Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 effective March 3, 2026

II. Remainder effective May 2, 2026