

HB 1689 - AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

03/26/2026 1204s

2026 SESSION

26-2769

12/08

HOUSE BILL **1689**

AN ACT relative to the term of office for county officers in Belknap and Merrimack counties.

SPONSORS: Rep. Morse, Merr. 3

COMMITTEE: Municipal and County Government

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AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill extends the term of office for certain elected county officers in Belknap and Merrimack counties to 4 years. The bill also requires that the elections for such Merrimack county officers coincide with the presidential election every 4 years.

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Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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

AN ACT relative to the term of office for county officers in Belknap and Merrimack counties.

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

1 1 Elections; State and County Officers to be Elected; Elected for 2-Year Term; Belknap and  
2 Merrimack County Officer Terms Increased. Amend RSA 653:1, V to read as follows:

3 V. One sheriff, one county attorney, one county treasurer, one register of deeds, and one  
4 register of probate by the voters in each county; provided that, at the 2022 state general election,  
5 and at each subsequent state general election, any such officer in Rockingham county shall be  
6 chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term; and, provided that, at the 2024 state general  
7 election, and at each subsequent state general election, any such officer in Coos county shall be  
8 chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term; **and, provided that, at the 2026 state  
9 general election, and at each subsequent state general election, any such officer in Belknap  
10 county shall be chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term; and, provided that, at  
11 the 2028 state general election and at each subsequent state general election, any such  
12 officer in Merrimack county shall be chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term;**

13 2 The State and Its Government; County Attorneys; Election; Temporary Vacancies. Amend  
14 RSA 7:33 to read as follows:

15 7:33 Election; Temporary Vacancies. There shall be a county attorney for each county, who  
16 shall be a member of the New Hampshire bar, elected biennially by the voters of the county;  
17 provided that, at the 2022 state general election, and at each subsequent state general election, the  
18 county attorney for Rockingham county shall be chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term;  
19 and, provided that, at the 2024 state general election, and at each subsequent state general election,  
20 the county attorney for Coos county shall be chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term;  
21 **and, provided that, at the 2026 state general election, and at each subsequent state general  
22 election, the county attorney for Belknap county shall be chosen in the county by the voters  
23 for a 4-year term; and provided that, at the 2028 state general election, and at each  
24 subsequent state general election, the county attorney for Merrimack county shall be  
25 chosen in the county by the voters for a 4-year term.** If the county attorney is absent at any  
26 term of court or unable to discharge the duties of the office, the superior court, acting as a body, shall  
27 appoint a county attorney, who shall be a member of the New Hampshire bar, for the time being and  
28 allow said appointee such compensation for his or her services as set by the county delegation.

29 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.