

# Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee

*Kevin Condict 271-7875*

**SB 190**, relative to the state health assessment and state health improvement plan advisory council and the commission on the interdisciplinary primary care workforce.

**Hearing Date:** February 19, 2025

**Time Opened:** 9:30 a.m.

**Time Closed:** 9:39 a.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Pearl, McGough, Gannon and Reardon

**Members of the Committee Absent :** Senator Altschiller

**Bill Analysis:** This bill sets quorum requirements and requirements for certain members to be present at the physical location of the meeting, as well as other meeting requirements, for both the state health assessment and state health improvement plan advisory council and the commission on the interdisciplinary primary care workforce.

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**Sponsors:**  
Sen. Prentiss

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**Who supports the bill:** Sen. Suzanne Prentiss (SD 5), Whitney Hammond (DHHS), and Janet Lucas.

**Who opposes the bill:** None.

**Who is neutral on the bill:** Ed Shanshala (SHA-SHIP) and Abby Rogers (DHHS).

**Summary of testimony presented:**

**Senator Suzanne Prentiss, Senate District 5**

**Abby Rogers, Department of Health and Human Services**

- Sen. Prentiss introduced Senate Bill 190. This bill is a request of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).
- Sen. Prentiss said that the bill strives to change the quorum requirements, while meeting the RSA 91-A obligations, for the State Health Assessment (SHA) and State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Advisory Council. The bill also changes the quorum requirements for the Commission on the Interdisciplinary Primary Care Workforce (CIPCW). Both entities are based out of the DHHS.

SHA-SHIP is a tool that charts the course to improve health in New Hampshire. It identifies priority areas, like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, that are impacting the state's public health landscape and sets out a strategy to combat these.

- Sen. Prentiss said that she has interacted with the SHIP in the area of emergency preparedness for public health.
- Sen. Prentiss said that the SHIP council is large; there are thirty-nine members. She said this bill allows for one-seventh of the commission or council to be in the room, then the rest can participate electronically but they must follow the same rules by RSA 91-A.
- Sen. Prentiss said there are twenty-three members of the CIPCW, and that they face similar challenges achieving a quorum. She said that not being able to achieve a quorum for either the commission or the council impacts the ability to plan, study, and move forward.
- Sen. Prentiss said that the State never discourages people from showing up in person, but should there be unfortunate circumstances this should be an option. She emphasized that with electronic participation everything must still be synchronous, and that everyone should be seen and heard at all times.
- Sen. Prentiss said this bill would help these groups work for a healthier New Hampshire.
- Ms. Rogers reiterated that this bill was at the request of the Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) within the DHHS. She said these two commissions, the CIPCW and the SHA-SHIP Council, have struggled to meet quorum requirements. There are multiple reporting requirements for these groups, and this bill would help to increase the functionality of those groups.

### **Whitney Hammond, Department of Health and Human Services**

- Ms. Hammond explained that she is the Interim Deputy Director for the DPHS.
- Ms. Hammond provided context for why the SHA-SHIP Council is so large. When RSA 126-A:81 and RSA 126-A:82 were passed, the intent was broad membership for the Council beyond the typical public health and healthcare partners so that the Council could address social needs related to health. She noted that there is statewide representation on the Council.
- Ms. Hammond said the Council has been meeting monthly, and that they meet roughly ten times per year. She said attendance at meetings is right around what this bill requires. She said the Council has good participation virtually.
- Ms. Hammond said that being able to have a quorum and vote on official business, and approve the SHA and the SHIP, would help the Council become more effective at their charge.

### **Ed Shanshala, State Health Assessment and Improvement Advisory Council**

- Mr. Shanshala explained that he is the co-chair of the SHA-SHIP Council. He said his goal was to have a SHIP that was increasingly accessible and actionable.
- Mr. Shanshala said this bill enhances the Council's ability to be effective and efficient while honoring the transparency and RSAs that relate to good governance and good meeting hygiene.
- Mr. Shanshala said that learning from his colleagues across the state has been valuable, and that the Council is constantly looking at how to take the SHIP and integrate it in the North Country.

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Date Hearing Report completed: February 27, 2025