

# Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee

*Kevin Condict 271-7875*

**HB 445**, establishing a study commission to examine the causes of and ways to alleviate the shortage of law enforcement officers in New Hampshire.

**Hearing Date:** April 16, 2025

**Time Opened:** 9:27 a.m.

**Time Closed:** 9:38 a.m.

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

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill establishes a commission to study the causes of and ways to alleviate the shortage of law enforcement officers in New Hampshire, provides duties thereto, and provides for its repeal.

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**Sponsors:**

Rep. Roy

Rep. D. Mannion

Rep. Rhodes

Rep. Tenczar

Sen. Carson

Sen. Gannon

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**Who supports the bill:** Michael McLaughlin (Teamsters 633), Elizabeth Sargent (NHTA), John Scippa (NHPSTC), Jonathan Melanson (NHPA & NHTA), and Sen. William Gannon (SD 23).

**Who opposes the bill:** None.

**Who is neutral on the bill:** None.

**Summary of testimony presented:**

**Representative Terry Roy, Rockingham 31**

- Rep. Roy introduced House Bill 445.
- Over the decade he has been in the legislature, he has seen the law enforcement community in the state suffer multiple bad years regarding being able to recruit and retain employees. He said there is not a municipality in the state that is not suffering in terms of staffing, being able to recruit new people, and retain them.
- Rep. Roy said that it is no secret that the State does not have a lot of money. He said that usually personnel issues come down to money.

- Rep. Roy explained that the idea of this bill is to put together a brain trust of people that know law enforcement and bring in different stakeholders. He noted that the bill includes a “class to cruiser” idea, where one of the assets in the state is ownership of universities. He suggested the idea that someone be able to sign an agreement to work with a department for a certain number of years and get their tuition for a criminal justice degree waived.
- Rep. Roy said that from his conversations with law enforcement, he believes this bill would help to bolster their ranks.
- He stated that the retirement system needs to be looked at. He said New Hampshire is losing law enforcement to every surrounding state due to our retirement system. He said it needs to be looked at from a long-term perspective.
- Rep. Roy called this bill necessary, noting it comes at no cost and could provide significant benefits.
- Rep. Roy noted that there will be a request to add a representative from the New Hampshire Sheriff’s Association (NHSA), and from the Department of Corrections (DOC), and he would support that.

**Michael McLaughlin, Teamsters Local 633**

- Mr. McLaughlin said he was testifying to speak about Sen. Carson’s amendment 2025-1620s. He explained that the amendment adds a representative from the DOC and a representative from Teamsters Local 633.
- Mr. McLaughlin explained that Teamsters Local 633 has over thirty-two law enforcement bargaining units in their union membership. He said they have the inside out knowledge of the law enforcement system, which would be beneficial to the commission this bill is putting together.
- Mr. McLaughlin said that DOC officers have expertise, as they work daily in a law enforcement venue.

**Elizabeth Sargent, New Hampshire Sheriff’s Association**

- Ms. Sargent said that the New Hampshire Sheriff’s Association would like a representative added to this commission.

**John Scippa, New Hampshire Police Standards and Training**

- Mr. Scippa stated that he supports this bill and said he discussed it with Rep. Roy.
- Mr. Scippa said his only concern is that this bill would in no way water down or circumvent the certification, training, and regulatory oversight of Police Standards and Training. He said Rep. Roy assured him that is not part of this effort.

- Mr. Scippa agreed with Rep. Roy's concerns that they are not currently seeing much difficulty with recruitment, but there are retention issues.
- Mr. Scippa said he supports the idea of getting people together to discuss these issues and build a strong support system to retain police officers in New Hampshire. He expressed that experience is by far the best teacher. He said that when an officer leaves it creates a vacuum.
- Sen. Pearl asked Mr. Scippa if he had read the amendment if Mr. Scippa had any objections.
  - o Mr. Scippa said he had no objection to the request for those other folks to be added to the commission.

### **Kurt Ehrenberg, Humane World For Animals**

- Mr. Ehrenberg requested that a representative from the Animal Control Officer's Association be added to the commission.

### **Representative Terry, Rockingham 31 (continued)**

- Sen. Pearl noted the requests of previous speakers. He asked Rep. Roy if he would be fine with those requests.
  - o Rep. Roy stated he has no specific objection. He asked the Committee to keep in mind how unwieldy study commissions can be.
- Sen. McGough believed that a military group should be included. He asked if there should be a member from the Department of Defense.
  - o Rep. Roy said it would be helpful to have someone from the Adjutant General's office.

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Date Hearing Report completed: April 22, 2025