



Capitol Report

New Hampshire Senator Lou D'Allesandro • Summer 2011



N.H. Sen. Lou D'Allesandro in Senate chambers

GOP-crafted budget fails state's needy

While everyone agrees that the tough economy requires tightening budgets, the two-year \$10.2 billion state budget just passed along party lines leaves many New Hampshire residents without help they desperately need.

"We can do better, and we must do better to protect the citizens of New Hampshire," said Sen. Lou D'Allesandro, D-Manchester. "This is a bad budget that will cost us jobs, increase our property taxes and put at risk the lives of our most vulnerable citizens."

A budget recommended by Gov. John Lynch in February cut most state agency budgets by 5 percent. The final GOP budget funded by state taxes is about 8 percent less than the current two-year budget. Overall spending is about 6 percent less.

The House version had originally slashed millions of dollars from Lynch's budget and eliminated programs for the needy. The Senate Finance Committee, which

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Do you have a comment?

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D'Allesandro receives first Peterson award

One of the state Senate's most enduring and identifiable members has been awarded the first-ever Walter R. Peterson Citizen Leader Award.

Sen. Lou D'Allesandro, D-Manchester, received the honor during commencement exercises at Franklin Pierce University in May.

Peterson, who served two-terms as governor of New Hampshire, was the also the university's second president from 1975-1995. Peterson, 88, lost a battle with lung

cancer in June.

Current Franklin Pierce President James F. Birge said the Peterson Award mirrors the accomplishments of its name sake and is intended to "honor an individual for his or her extraordinary commitment to public service, selfless contributions to higher education, sense of humor and high moral character."

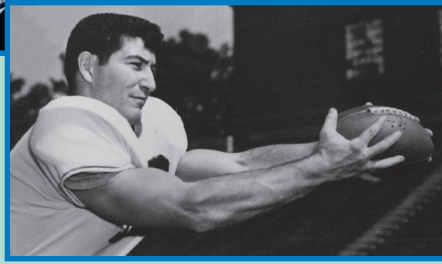
D'Allesandro, who is well-known for delivering passionate

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UNH Photographic Services/Mike Ross

From left, Former NH First Lady Dorothy Peterson, former Gov. Walter Peterson, UNH President Mark Huddleston, Sen. Lou D'Allesandro and his wife, Pat, at the Athletic Hall of Fame induction ceremonies. Below, D'Allesandro as a UNH tight end



UNH lauds D'Allesandro

The University of New Hampshire has named Lou D'Allesandro '61 to its Athletic Hall of Fame.

While at UNH, D'Allesandro excelled in football, baseball, and lacrosse. In football, he played tight end; he lettered each of the three years he played and was co-captain his senior year.

After graduation, D'Allesandro continued his love of sports, higher education, leadership and service. For five years, he continued to play in the Atlantic Coast Football league, taught and coached high school football and basketball and eventually went on to work in college administration for 30 years.

D'Allesandro has been a

public servant to the state since 1974 when he served on the Executive Council. He served in the House of Representatives for two terms, ran for governor twice, and now is in his seventh term in the state Senate.

He has served on many civic organizations, including the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame, the NH Hockey Hall of Fame, the board of directors of the Manchester Community Health Center and the New England Board of Higher Education.

He served on the board of directors for the UNH Alumni Association and was president of the board of directors of the UNH 100 Club. ★

Seniors eligible for free health benefits

NH Sen. Lou D'Allesandro joined health care and senior groups at a recent news conference to promote the many free preventive care benefits for seniors through the Affordable Care Act.

The event was part of a national initiative by Health and Human Services to ensure seniors know about services they are entitled to.

"Seniors have access to a

wide array of free preventive care services, and we want to make sure they know about these services and take full advantage of them," D'Allesandro said.

Under the new health law, more than 215,000 New Hampshire seniors who receive Medicare benefits qualify for free yearly wellness exams and many preventive care services. ★

Peterson

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speeches on the Senate floor in support of issues he feels strongly about, admitted receiving the Citizen Leader honor caused him to quietly reflect.

"Next to marrying my wife, I can honestly say this is the best honor I have ever received. I have so much respect for Walter Peterson and all that he has done for the people of New Hampshire. He is a public servant in the truest sense of the word. I am truly humbled to receive this new leadership award that bears his name," he said.

D'Allesandro is currently serving his seventh term in the state Senate representing District 20. He is also a former Executive Councilor and two-term member of the NH House of Representatives.

An active member of the local community, D'Allesandro has served in many civic capacities.

The Peterson Award medallion is engraved with a likeness of the former governor and is presented to the recipient along with a \$2,500 cash award. Additionally, a \$2,500 contribution is made in honor of the recipient's charity of choice.

As flags flew at half-staff in Peterson's honor June 2, D'Allesandro presented \$500 checks to five non-profits: Hear in NH, New Horizons, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Webster House and the Friendly Kitchen.

Jason Tremblay from Make-A-Wish said D'Allesandro's contribution would help his organization get one step closer to granting its 1000th wish to a child in New Hampshire, while Charlie Sherman of New Horizons thanked the senator for supporting the shelter that is helping 250 families who are homeless for the first time.

The Friendly Kitchen might have been the most grateful, having just lost its facility to a fire. Board Member Hope Butterworth said, "We're still standing. We're still cooking ... but everything we used to cook our meals was destroyed. We're starting over, so this check is greatly appreciated." ★

Budget

Continued from page 1

included D'Allesandro as the only Democrat, restored \$75 million from the House proposal to cut \$319 million in general fund spending.

Democrats argued, though, that more social service cuts should be restored since the budget estimates a \$33 million surplus, earmarked for a state rainy day fund.

The funds that were restored will most benefit the mentally ill and disabled, but they do not go far enough, and some parts of the bill were devastating.

One highly controversial move by Republicans was to cut cigarette taxes by a dime a pack. New Hampshire already has the lowest prices for cigarettes in New England; vendors in the state will have to sell millions more packs to make up the lost \$12 million in state revenue.

"To try to increase cigarette sales in New Hampshire simply does not make sense," D'Allesandro said. "We know the dire consequences for smokers and for others through secondhand smoke. We know smoking causes cancer, it kills and it creates immense health care costs. It's a very bad situation for our state."

Despite his dissatisfaction with the budget, Gov. Lynch allowed the bill to become law without his signature in order to avoid a government shutdown if he vetoed the budget.

"Given the Legislature's rejection of proposed remedies to the problems in the budget, it is clear that a veto would not lead to a better budget," Lynch said. He also pointed out that if no budget were in place July 1, vital services would be suspended, including driver's license renewals, business permitting and critical road

repairs.

Lynch and others however, have pointed out flaws in the budget.

- Hundreds of jobs will be eliminated, which will boost unemployment rates and stifle economic recovery.
- Fiscal responsibility will be downshifted to the local level to make up for a loss of state funding, such

as an elimination of state contributions to the pensions of municipal, county and school employees. This will increase property taxes or cause cuts in services and local jobs such as police, fire or public works.

- Tuition increases are almost certain for college students in the University System of New Hampshire after cuts of millions of dollars in student aid.

- Funding cuts for needy children; adoptive parents; treatment and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV; and elderly housing will cause financial crises for thousands of families and many county and local governments — and could end up costing the state more. For example, D'Allesandro said, the elimination of \$1.5 million to help about 240 elderly people with housing services such as meals and light housekeeping could send some to nursing homes, which would cost the state more money.
- Hospitals around the state will face deep cuts in reimbursements for caring for the poor. Loss of state funding also will cost hospitals matching federal funding.

"This leaves so many without the resources they need and deserve," D'Allesandro said. "If you're poor, hope you get rich quick. If you're sick, hope you get well quick. If you have other problems, hope they disappear quick because no one will be there to help you." ★

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— Sen. Lou D'Allesandro



**Happy
Birthday,
Senator!**

Friends and family will gather Wednesday, July 27, at the Athens Restaurant in Manchester to celebrate NH Sen. Lou D'Allesandro's birthday.

D'Allesandro's birthday party has become an annual celebration eagerly anticipated by his friends, constituents and supporters as a chance to honor his nearly four decades of public service to the

state of New Hampshire.

D'Allesandro has represented District 20, including Manchester Wards 3,4,10 and 11 and Goffstown, in the Senate since 1998. He has also served in the New Hampshire House and as a member of the Executive Council.

The party will be 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Athens, 31 Central St., Manchester. ★



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Plan saves NH students thousands in tuition

The New England Board of Higher Education’s Tuition Break program, the Regional Student Program (RSP), has saved thousands of students well into the billions of dollars since it was established in 1957.

RSP enables residents from all six New England states to enroll at out-of-state New England public colleges and universities at a discount. Students are eligible for the tuition break when they enroll in an approved major that is not offered by the public colleges and universities in their home state. More than 700 undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offered through the RSP by New England’s 82 public colleges and universities.

In the 2010-11 academic year, over 9,000 New England residents saved an estimated \$53 million in tuition because of the program. A full-time RSP student received an average tuition break of \$7,000.

The RSP Tuition Break program not only saves students thousands of dollars in college tuition but also

enables the six New England states to expand educational opportunities for their residents and avoid duplication of costly academic programs.

NH Sen. Lou D’Allesandro — a former teacher, coach and college administrator — is a member of the NEBHE board and former chairman.

“This has been a tremendous benefit to students in our district,” D’Allesandro said. About 60 students from Manchester and Gofftown’s Senate district participated in the program in 2011 and saved about \$327,000.

More than 3,100 New Hampshire students participated this year and saved more than \$16.2 million in tuition.

“Affordable higher education is essential to economic growth,” D’Allesandro said. “This program enables so many more students to go to college and prepare themselves for successful careers.” ★

For more information on the plan, visit the NEBHE website at <http://www.nebhe.org/programs-overview/rsp-tuition-break/overview/>

Join Sen. D’Allesandro from 6:40 to 7 every Thursday morning on WGIR 610 AM for Capitol Comments. Starting this fall, D’Allesandro also will debut a television show on the Goffstown public access channel.