In San Diego, former Republican city councilman Carl DeMaio is challenging first-term Democratic Rep. Scott Peters.

"You can't focus on any of the nasty comments or attacks - not just from far right, also from far left," DeMaio says.

During his unsuccessful 2012 Republican mayoral campaign, DeMaio and his male partner of six years were booed as they walked hand in hand in San Diego's gay pride parade.

"Every once in a while we'll get some hate that is truly over the top - a truly venomous voice mail message. Every time we need a lift-me-up, we play it and chuckle," DeMaio says. "It's just a reminder that what we're fighting for matters."

He is fighting his own party, too.

The GOP's formal platform, as set in its 2012 national convention, declares that "marriage, the union of one man and one woman, must be upheld as the national standard."

Republican opposition to gay marriage has become less visible recently as the GOP works to improve its image and polling suggests that most Americans support same-sex marriage.

Prominent social conservatives such as former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum and Ralph Reed, former leader of the Christian Coalition, declined to be interviewed for this story.

As a senator in 2003, Santorum, a leading candidate in the 2012 presidential primary, compared homosexual acts to child molestation and bestiality.

Last month, Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., drew national attention for pressuring the House Republican campaign arm not to support openly gay candidates. That led House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, to pledge public support for gay Republicans.
Boehner traveled to Massachusetts in 2012 to help raise money for Tisei, who notes that more than 70 members of Congress supported his last campaign.

Still, Tisei says the GOP must do more to change the perception that "we're the party that wants to deny people their rights and interfere with their personal lives."

In particular, he says Republicans need gay members in their ranks to help shift their mindset on key policies. "It would be a lot harder to take positions that discriminate against people when you have (gay) people in the room you work with on a daily basis that you like and know," Tisei says.

Democrats currently have eight openly gay members serving in Congress, including Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who last year became the nation's first openly gay senator.

There have been no openly gay Republicans in Congress since Rep. Jim Kolbe of Arizona retired in 2006. First elected in 1984, Kolbe didn't disclose his sexual orientation until 1996.


In the 2014 election, the number of openly gay House candidates overwhelmingly favors Democrats, according to a list compiled by the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, which works to elect gay candidates at all levels. Of 14 openly gay candidates expected to run, 11 are Democrats, including six incumbents and high-profile challenger Sean Eldridge of New York, the husband of Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes.

Considered top-tier challengers, Tisei and DeMaio recently teamed up to raise money in joint appearances across the country for a newly formed political action committee known as the Equality Leadership Fund. Last month, they traveled to Washington, New York and Florida and expect another tour in the spring.

In New Hampshire, Innis is trying to unseat Democratic incumbent Carol Shea-Porter. But he must first survive a Republican primary contest against Frank Guinta, a former congressman unseated in the last election. With long ties to the business community, Innis is expected to have strong financial backing in an election he says will be decided on fiscal issues.
"The best history we could make would be moving the budget toward balance and getting ourselves to a position where we could invest in our future again," he says.

New Hampshire GOP strategist Jamie Burnett says he doesn't know whether candidates' sexual orientation helps or hurts their electoral prospects.

"Some social conservatives might object, but many Republicans might not care at all and perhaps see it as softening the party's image," he says. "This is unchartered territory in recent New Hampshire Republican politics."

###

**State Representative David Campbell (D-Nashua)**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

Kimberly Houghton

Nashua duck case: Two aldermen seek commissioner's resignation

NASHUA — Two city officials say Police Commissioner Thomas Pappas should resign because of his involvement with state Rep. David Campbell and an accident in which the lawmaker ran over and killed five ducks.

"Commissioner Pappas should resign, but does not seem inclined to do so," said Alderman Ken Siegel, Ward 9. "... Now, we can only sit idly by and hope that the governor puts ethics ahead of politics."

Members of Nashua's police commission are appointed by the governor.

According to a police report, Campbell had a couple of drinks at a Crowne Plaza restaurant Dec. 23 and then ran over several mallard ducks with his BMW outside the hotel. Pappas, Campbell's friend and attorney, then picked up Campbell from the hotel.
Pappas contacted the police department about two hours after the accident to ask if Campbell could come to the police station the next day.

Campbell pleaded no contest to a charge of illegal taking of waterfowl. He was not charged with drunk driving, and has repeatedly said he was not intoxicated.

"I think the honorable thing would be to step away," Alderman-at-Large Diane Sheehan said of Pappas. "If he is in charge of deciding what is ethical for the police department, then I agree — I think the level of ethics we ask police to stand up to should be followed by its leadership, which needs to do the same."

Pappas, chairman of the Nashua Police Commission, has remained silent about his involvement in Campbell’s accident, and has not returned repeated phone calls and emails seeking comment. The remaining two police commissioners — Thomas Maffee and Robert Valade — also are not commenting.

Attorney General Joe Foster said last week that his department is reviewing police reports and audio recordings from the incident to determine whether a further probe is necessary. However, Foster said an official investigation has not yet been opened. Police Chief John Seusing has maintained that Pappas' intervention did not influence Campbell's case.

"The Nashua Police Department looked into this incident at the Crowne Plaza thoroughly, and charged Mr. Campbell with what we thought was the most appropriate charge," Seusing said last week.

Campbell has repeatedly apologized for the incident. He paid a fine of $620 for the violation, a $75 restitution payment and a donation of $695 to New Hampshire Audubon.

###

**Governor Chris Christie/Matt Mowers/Jennifer Horn/Steve Duprey**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

**John DiStaso’s Granite Status**
John DiStaso's Granite Status: Despite 'Bridgegate,' poll says Granite State Republicans like Chris Christie

CHRISTIE UPS AND DOWNS. When we last left New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and "Bridgegate" last Sunday, top political experts in the first-in-the-nation presidential primary state were saying the potential Republican candidate would not be hurt by the scandal unless a smoking gun linked him to the George Washington Bridge lane closures.

And a poll of New Hampshire Republican presidential primary voters taken directly after his lengthy "apology" news conference showed support has grown since last September.

But that poll was taken before last week's developments:

-- A Democratic-led New Jersey legislative committee opened a probe by issuing subpoenas for current and former Christie staffers, among others. That was in addition to a probe announced earlier by the state's U.S. Attorney.

The subpoenas for 17 individuals and three organizations seek documents for now, the chairman of the legislative panel said. Christie's office immediately hired its own outside legal team headed by a longtime associate of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani.

-- The executive director of the New Hampshire Republican State Committee, 24-year-old Matt Mowers, was among those subpoenaed. We confirmed Friday that his subpoena at this point also involves only texts and emails, but sources also said it is possible Mowers will be called later to testify.

Mowers, before joining the New Hampshire GOP in November, was a regional campaign director for Christie's successful reelection effort and was identified as the one who approached Democratic Fort Lee, N.J., Mayor Mark Sokolich last spring about endorsing Christie.

Mowers previously served in Christie's governor's office as regional government relations director, and for at least part of that time, his boss was Bridget Anne Kelly, the deputy chief of staff Christie fired.

Mowers has not been accused so far of involvement in the decision to close the approach lanes to the busy bridge, but while refusing to comment, he, too, as of Friday, was in the process of hiring an attorney.
State GOP Chairman Jennifer Horn noted Mowers has not been accused of any wrongdoing, and in a vote of confidence said, "I look forward to his continued service to our party." Another top party official insisted Friday that Mowers "will be fine."

We'll see.

The pre-subpoena poll, taken Jan. 9 to 12 of 528 Republican primary voters by Democratic-leaning Public Policy Polling, had Christie, with 24 percent, ahead of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, each with 12 percent.

When PPP last polled Granite State GOP primary voters, last September, moderate Christie and conservative Paul were in a virtual tie at 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

PPP said 89 percent of New Hampshire GOP primary voters said they had heard about the scandal, and 64 percent said their opinion of Christie was the same as it had been before he admitted his administration (though not him personally) ordered the lane closures. Eighteen percent said their opinion of him had gone down, while 14 percent said they actually felt better about him than before.

Christie's favorable/unfavorable rating among GOP primary voters was an impressive 57/27 percent.

Democrats, meanwhile, love Hillary Clinton more than ever. Her support jumped from 57 percent last September to 65 percent, with Vice President Joe Biden a distant second at 10 percent.

But in a head-to-head potential 2016 general election matchup, Clinton leads Christie by only 43 percent to 39 percent, nearly within the 2.7 percent margin of error. The 1,354-voter sample comprised 44 percent independents, 28 percent Democrats and 27 percent Republicans, PPP said.

That's not to say that Christie would not face challenges in the first-primary state should he run, as we pointed out last week, with the help of a few top political experts. That's especially so if any direct Christie links to scandal emerge.
Top Democratic National Committee spokesman Mo Elleithee noted our Jan. 12 report in a nationally circulated memo Friday, adding, "Needless to say, (Bridgegate) is not how Governor Christie wants to be introduced to Granite Staters."

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THE HOWARD DEAN PLAYBOOK. Republicans don't like Howard Dean's liberal view of the world, but they sure respect the former Democratic National Committee chairman's party-building abilities.

When Dean headed the DNC from 2005 to 2009, his 50-state strategy revolutionized how the national party applied its resources. Dean recognized the campaign season never truly ends and continued to pour money into state party organizations continually, rather than waiting until the height of an election cycle.

The Republican National Committee is finally catching up.

A wire report last week said the RNC was "getting out of the business of underwriting" state party organizations and doing television ads. The reference to "underwriting" was later removed after the RNC complained that the opposite was true.

Steve Duprey, veteran New Hampshire RNC member and former state party chair, said the RNC intends to dole out dollars differently.

"We learned a lot from 2012," he said. "You can't have these (RNC-funded) 'Victory' efforts, opening eight or 10 offices around the state, start in the final three months of a campaign and be as effective as you need to be. And you can't leave it to the candidates to build their own data bases" identifying voters.

At a meeting of the full 168-member RNC this week, the party budget for 2014 will be reviewed, Duprey said, "and we're going to put a heck of a lot less into these 'Victory' office pushes and campaign pushes in the last three or four months and instead invest the money on an ongoing basis."

He said the RNC has already begun the new approach here and in other states.
Duprey, a confidante of Chairman Reince Priebus, said the RNC began last summer sending the NHGOP $12,000 to $14,000 monthly, which has funded two of the party’s four staffers. The two are working exclusively on developing data bases and “strengthening our field operations,” he said.

"That had been unheard of in the recent past,” Duprey said.

The state Democratic Party, by the way, has 11 staffers; two funded by the DNC.

"Two or three more people doing this for two years in New Hampshire is a lot more effective than having 10 or even 20 people come in for three months," Duprey maintained.

The back-loaded 2012 approach "was too little, too late."

The RNC sent about $1.3 million to its state party in 2012. The state Democratic Party had received $3.2 million from the DNC.

Duprey also said that much of the 2012 funding the NHGOP and other state party organizations received was to support television advertising, but now, he said, "you'll see less of an emphasis on that and more on strengthening and building that database and using it the right way."

Broadcast advertising will be left to the outside advocacy groups, PACS and SuperPACs.

Duprey said Dean's approach to building state party organizations was "how the Democrats turned this from a red to a purple state. The Republicans have now come full circle and we're going back to that. We lost our way."

(SUNDAY AFTERNOON UPDATE: Coincidentally, 10 years ago tonight Dean made the infamous "Dean Scream" in Iowa before heading to New Hampshire where his presidential chances quickly died in the first-in-the-nation primary.
Today, Dean emailed Democracy for America supporters: "When I said we were heading to New Hampshire and South Carolina and Oklahoma... and to Washington, DC to take back the White House... it turns out I wasn't kidding.

"In a funny way, that moment was the launch of the 50 State Strategy -- a leave-no-community-behind framework for change that transformed the Democratic Party in the years to come, fueling my campaign to become DNC Chair in 2005 and the fight to take back Congress in 2006 and the presidency in 2008."

The email's subject line: YEEEEAAAARRRRGGGHHHH!!! )

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DEMOCRATIC GRASSROOTS TRAINING. The Democrats have their own association for the chairs of state committees. The Association of State Democratic Chairs has been headed for several years now by New Hampshire's Raymond Buckley.

Ramping up for 2014, ASDC will focus on "communications and digital" organizing at its winter meeting on Feb. 26 in Washington. State chairs and vice chairs will train in the DNC's Media Facility, where Obama prepares for political speeches and debates.

For the next three weeks, the ASDC is hosting weekly webinars focusing on showing state party officials how to effectively coordinate campaigns.

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SEEING PURPLE. Last month, we reported first that veteran political pros Republican Pat Griffin and Democrat Jim Demers were about to head a new Boston office of the nationwide strategic communications and consulting firm Purple Strategies.

With the office in the process of opening, the company's first Granite State event is slated for Jan. 30 at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics. A panel discussion will focus on "the political mood of New Hampshire" looking ahead to the 2014 and 2016 elections.
Joining Griffin and Demers will be Purple Strategies' co-founders, Republican Alex Castellanos and Democrat Steve McMahon, and public opinion research expert Doug Usher.

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RUBENS, TOO. Potential GOP U.S. Senate candidate Scott Brown last week penned his second email in two weeks soliciting donations for the state GOP.

Announced candidate Jim Rubens will soon do the same.

Brown, in a possible further hint of his political plans, cited "legendary statesmen like Senators Styles Bridges, Norris Cotton and Warren Rudman" as evidence of the state's "proud tradition of sending independent and fiscally responsible leaders to Washington."

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QUICK TAKES:

-- Sen. Jeanne Shaheen's camp, after reportedly raising $4.5 million in 2013 and $5.8 million since being elected in 2008, announced Friday her Senate office state director, Mike Vlachich, is moving over to manage her campaign. He'll be replaced by Sarah Holmes, a longtime adviser and current special assistant for policy and projects.


-- The conservative issues group Americans for Prosperity-New Hampshire has a new office ready to officially open in downtown Manchester on Wednesday.

-- With a special GOP primary for the District 1 Executive Council seat on tap Tuesday, former state Sen. Joe Kenney said he has won the backing of 14 sitting state House members in the district and plans to air three television ads in the coming days. Former Belknap County Commissioner Christopher Boothby recently unveiled 11 House members and 15 county officials backing him...
N.H. Local Ordinances

The New Hampshire Union Leader

John Quinn

State Civil Liberties Union threatens suit over panhandling law in Rochester

ROCHESTER — The New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union is threatening to sue the city if it does not rescind its new panhandling ordinance.

In a letter sent last month to the city attorney, NHCLU staff attorney Gilles Bissonnette said the ordinance is unconstitutional because it “proscribes a wide range of peaceful conduct” in the entire downtown business district. That abridges the right to free speech, he argued.

The NHCLU lawyer contends the ordinance is “plainly targeted, without any valid basis, at the poor and homeless.” And that, he said, violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

Last week, the city council met in non-public session with city attorney Danford Wensley to discuss the letter. City manager Dan Fitzpatrick said he thought it would be “more appropriate” to discuss it privately “under attorney-client privilege.”

While Fitzpatrick said the council did reach some decisions during the private session, he referred the matter to Wensley, who could not be reached for comment.

Police Chief Mike Allen said while the winter weather keeps most people inside, the crackdown on “aggressive” panhandling has been working since it went into effect in July. While he did not participate in the council’s conversation, Allen said police provided the NHCLU with log entries and reports about panhandling dating back to three years before the ordinance went into effect. He said police also provided a second set of reports since it took effect.
While a few of the log entries cite reports of “aggressive panhandling” and people violating “no trespassing orders” since July, Allen said he is not aware of any situations when people have been combative with police or other residents.

Police have only issued warnings to most panhandlers and informed them of the new ordinance, but a few citations were issued since July, according to police records.

Bissonnette said he has been in touch with the city attorney since Tuesday’s meeting. “And we continue to have cooperative discussions about what the next steps may be with respect to the ordinance,” he said.

He said he expects there will be “further consideration” of the issue at the next city council meeting on Feb. 2.

Bissonnette said one problem with the ordinance is that it targets a particular form of peaceful speech in public areas: solicitations for the purpose of “immediately obtaining money or any other object of value.”

“What’s exceptionally difficult about this particular ordinance is that it’s just carving out peaceful panhandling soliciting activity while allowing other forms of speech and solicitation in those same areas,” he said.

That’s what lawyers call a “content-based” restriction on speech, he said. And that is something that is “scrutinized at a much higher level by the courts.”

There has to be a really good reason to restrict such speech and it can’t just be that someone is bothering someone else, Bissonnette said. “When you’re trying to carve out certain types of peaceful speech as being prohibited, while allowing other forms of peaceful speech to be lawful, that is going to create grave constitutional concerns, and that’s really what we’re dealing with here,” he said.

While his Dec. 11 letter set a Jan. 3 deadline for the city to respond, Bissonnette said NHCLU is content for now to continue its “constructive dialogue” with Wensley.

Staff reporter Shawne K. Wickham contributed to this report.
Governor Maggie Hassan

The Nashua Telegraph

Kevin Landrigan

Hassan: Grades for NH governor’s first year in office

Grading Gov. Maggie Hassan on her first full year in office as New Hampshire’s 81st governor is complicated.

The Exeter Democrat, 54, won hard-fought victories to restore spending for higher education and mental health, producing a two-year freeze on in-state tuition hikes and settling a dangerous federal lawsuit.

But on the two issues on which Hassan spent the most political capital – legalizing a casino and expanding Medicaid – she stumbled badly, as her own party balked at more gambling and Senate Republicans blocked more health care for the poor.

A year ago, Hassan promised to return a tradition of “openness, bipartisanship and collective problem solving” in being sworn in as the second female chief executive in New Hampshire history.

But Hassan openly fought with Senate budget writers, accusing them of slashing spending that would throw the uninsured and sick out on the street. Three weeks after those comments, Hassan signed a state budget that looked much like the one she had railed against.

In the heat of her Medicaid expansion campaign, she went into three home districts of Senate Republicans and tried to browbeat them into endorsing a pending compromise; none of them did.

Most observers expected Hassan to model herself after exiting Democratic Gov. John Lynch, the longest-serving governor in state history.
But on the marquis social and cultural issues of the day – casinos, medical marijuana and the death penalty – Hassan broke with her mentor on all three.

Further, there’s strong evidence that Lynch cared little about feeding the party’s liberal political base, while Hassan cultivated it to great success.

Zandra Rice-Hawkins, who saw Hassan in the trenches as the executive director of the liberal Granite State Progress, thought her toughness set her apart.

“One of the most impressive things about Governor Hassan is that she is a true advocate for the issues she champions for Granite Staters,” Rice-Hawkins said. “She cares deeply about keeping the state fiscally responsible, expanding opportunities for small businesses and providing a safety net for our most vulnerable families.”

“She’s not afraid to work towards compromise, but she will draw a line in the sand when necessary.”

Uneventful first year

The Telegraph reached out to more than 25 veteran political observers across the ideological spectrum to try to craft a report card for Hassan’s first year.

Charles Arlinghaus, executive director of the conservative Josiah Bartlett Center for Public Policy, said that a year after Hassan soundly beat Republican Ovide Lamontagne in the election, opinions about her remain all over the lot.

“I think the governor’s first year was neither a hit nor a miss,” Arlinghaus said. “She didn’t have a major accomplishment, but neither did she have a major failure.

“If you liked her before, you still do. If you didn’t, she’s hasn’t changed your mind, either.”
Colin Van Ostern, a Concord Democratic political operative who came onto the Executive Council the same day Hassan took over, said she governed as a pragmatist, choosing competent agency heads even if they were Republicans, doubling the research and development tax credit, and partnering with business leaders.

"Governor Hassan has shown the rare ability to mix civility with determination and to mix Yankee practicality with a clear and forward-looking agenda," Van Ostern said.

"Those accomplishments don’t always win the political headlines, but they make a tremendous impact on keeping our state such a great place to start a business and raise a family."

Not surprisingly, Republican State Chairwoman Jennifer Horn characterized Hassan as a polarizing figure who talked a good game about collaboration, but too often tried to enforce her will and failed.

"What a disappointment," Horn said. "What Granite Staters can see for sure is that she is no John Lynch. Governor Hassan has been unable to get any of her priority initiatives passed, and proven herself to be incapable of the leadership necessary to bring people from both sides of the aisle together.

"Her budget was a disaster; her own party rejected it outright, and the governor was forced to hand over her responsibilities to the Republicans in the Senate."

New Hampshire voters in November 2012 made navigation less treacherous for Hassan than it had been for Lynch, giving her party control of the House and Executive Council and a bearable 13-11 GOP majority in the Senate.

Then, Senate President Peter Bragdon, R-Milford, an experienced adversary, exited as leader to become CEO of the former Local Government Center.

Also gone were arch-conservative House Speaker Bill O’Brien, R-Mont Vernon, who engineered 14 veto overrides of Lynch bills, and former Gov. John Sununu, the political Svengali as state GOP chairman during the 2010 tsunami that gave his party 3-1 majorities in the Legislature.
“She had the luxury of not having a speaker named O’Brien or a strong personality named Sununu as Republican Party chair,” said Arnie Arnesen, a former Democratic nominee for governor and Congress and a longtime liberal radio talk show host.

Big gamble

Hassan’s greatest miscalculation was thinking she could reverse generations of opposition to expanded gambling and get a casino bill through the Democrat-controlled House.

Hassan, having served as Senate majority leader, knew the upper chamber was wired to back a casino.

Rather than have it rise and fall on its own, Hassan upped the ante, building her two-year state budget and plenty of popular spending programs on proceeds from an $80 million casino license fee.

“When she was inaugurated, she said the state truly needed the gambling money. She was wrong,” said Republican National Committeeman Steve Duprey, of Concord, who co-heads Casino Free New Hampshire, an anti-casino advocacy group.

“Given the fiscal conservatism of O’Brien and Bragdon, no less, we ended with a $72 million surplus, and the budget restored cuts to UNH and hospitals. So her premise for the need for gambling was wrong.”

As expected, the Senate embraced her casino plan by a 2-1 margin, but House Democratic leaders built a budget without the gambling cash and then killed the bill by 35 votes.

It’s worth noting Hassan got 101 Democrats onboard for the casino, better than any previous effort by 40 votes.

And Sen. Jeff Woodburn, D-Dalton, said voters saw the state’s top elected official face bitter defeat and still emerge with the spending priorities she wanted through other means.
“Had it passed, she would have surpassed all modern-day governors for effective leadership,” Woodburn said. “It didn’t happen, but she proved she could handle defeat with grace and seamlessly transition on to other issues.”

Like any governor, Hassan had to weigh in earlier on the budget.

Five months after Hassan had to present a budget, the Senate relied on rosier revenue estimates in a spending plan that largely paid for Hassan’s spending increases without the need for casino cash.

Gregory Moore, a former House chief of staff who is state director of the conservative Americans for Prosperity, believes Hassan remains mired in her former life as a lawmaker.

“Governor Hassan’s first year showed that she hasn’t fully made the transition from a legislative mindset to that of an executive,” Moore said.

“On two of the biggest issues facing the state — expanded casino gaming and transportation funding — the governor said that something needed to be done, but then outsourced the details of those top initiatives to the Legislature, refusing to offer any specific guidance on what the final destination should look like.”

Democratic supporters vigorously disagreed with that characterization. They noted Hassan drove the medical marijuana debate, forcing advocates to remove a grow-your-own option that law enforcement had strongly opposed.

“New Hampshire is becoming increasingly comfortable with consensus-driven, middle-of-the-road Democratic governors, and Governor Hassan fits into this category,” Woodburn said. “But she posses something more: a certain toughness and boldness.

“She clearly enjoys being governor, and while circumspect, she’s proven not to be afraid to take risks and advocate for her priorities. Hassan promised to be an innovative governor, and she has by engaging, not just reacting to, the Legislature.”

Uphill session
With a casino, Medicaid expansion, gas tax/toll increase and death penalty repeal all coming before lawmakers this spring, it’s probably too early to consider a Hassan grade final.

Dante Scala, chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of New Hampshire, said political observers get sucked into the “who’s up, who’s down” watch about which voters could care less.

“Hassan’s first year in office is another example of the disconnect between how New Hampshire voters see the governor and how political insiders do,” Scala said.

Hassan’s policy failures suggest weakness, but Scala said that’s what people here want in their governor — a less than towering figure, someone with small constitutional powers who has to use people skills to persuade them.

“Voters see a governor who hasn’t changed her basic profile on issues, socially liberal, fiscally moderate since taking office,” Scala said. “They see relative peace in Concord, and a recovering economy.”

And like Lynch, Hassan has kept up a busy schedule of state and personal stops to promote the goodwill ambassador part of the job, which translates into public popularity.

“They also see a governor who has followed her predecessor’s lead in terms of relating to the people of her state,” Scala said. “Like Lynch, she treats the governorship as if she were mayor of a small town.”

The University of New Hampshire Survey Center’s latest poll had 57 percent with a favorable opinion of Hassan — not the 78 percent juggernaut Lynch had at the same point, but as good as former Gov. Craig Benson, who was at 58 percent in late 2003 before Lynch beat him a year later.

“Governor Hassan has had a modest first year in office,” center Director Andy Smith said. “She suffered two major legislative defeats — Republicans dictated the budget and gambling failed.

“That said, she made no major mistakes that have weakened her re-election chances, especially as the Republicans have yet to identify a significant contender.”
Prominent Republicans have taken a pass on taking Hassan on – Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley, Executive Councilor Chris Sununu, former Congressman Charles Bass, Senate President Chuck Morse, Bedford businessman Chuck Rolceck.

John Stephen, the 2010 nominee, and Bristol conservative activist Andrew Hemingway are still thinking about it.

This opening in part freed Hassan to become vice chairman of the Democratic Governors Association, the partisan enclave that pumped $8 million in attack ads to help defeat Lamontagne and elect her last year.

None of the last four Democratic governors here took on a national party leadership assignment.

Until Hassan wins again, however, many observers say her phantom opponent will remain no Republican at all, but the big-personality, small-"D" Democrat she followed into office.

"Rightly or wrongly, she will be judged by comparing her to her predecessor," Arlinghaus said. "Her style is much more political than Governor Lynch’s was.

"On the other hand, like Lynch, she has had few bold proposals. Lynch sought to befriend Republican leadership largely, while Hassan treats them like traditional political opponents.

"The result is that 2013 was politically neutral for her. But when you’re an incumbent who won her last election by 12 points, neutral is fine."

Kevin Landrigan can reached at 321-7040 or klandrigan@nashua telegraph.com. Also, follow Landrigan on Twitter (@Klandrigan).

###
Gov. Hassan visits Pittsfield school to see impact of redesign plan

PITTSFIELD — The staff and students at Pittsfield Middle High School on Friday showed Gov. Maggie Hassan how their new way of learning is paying off.

Hassan was witness to the Pittsfield School District Redesign plan, the result of a community effort to improve the schools that began in 2009.

“We didn’t like the results we were getting in the schools,” said John Freeman, SAU 51 superintendent of schools. “The community came together and said ‘we can do better.’”

The school system adopted a “student-centered” learning approach that aims to put students first and empower them to take ownership of their learning. After a “self-discovery” process in which students learn the ways in which they learn best, each student develops individual learning plans, with help and support of fellow students, faculty, and family.

The school’s learning system also includes “extended learning opportunities,” or opportunities for students to earn credits by working for businesses and organizations outside the school.

Aiding in the transition was a three-year, $2 million federal School Improvement Grant and a $200,000 grant the school received from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Freeman said.

On Friday, Hassan took part in student meetings and met with students afterward.

She was impressed.
“Pittsfield students are taking responsibility for their own futures by engaging in developing their curriculum and by participating in extended learning opportunities outside of the classroom,” she said. “It is an impressive program and I look forward to the students’ progress and success.”

School administrators said her visit was “exciting,” and likely meant a lot to students.

“This is extremely exciting, we are being recognized and acknowledged for transforming our school,” said Tobi Chassie, a district administrator.

Students in attendance also endorsed the redesign.

“It’s engaging, definitely more hands-on than reading from a book,” said sophomore Lilly Plummer.

“It’s been a good change,” said Kyle Hamel, also a sophomore.

“Students get a lot more involved in learning.”

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###

**N.H. State Budget**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

AnnMarie Timmins

**State audit questions tax credit awards to Friendly Kitchen, Boys and Girls Club, Red River Theatres**

In a new report, state auditors concluded that 15 of the 28 projects the Community Development Finance Authority supported with tax credits last year, including the Friendly Kitchen and Red River Theatres, do not appear to qualify for the financial assistance under state law largely because they did not target unemployment or housing shortages.
The CDFA, which was created by the Legislature in 1983 but is not a state department, vehemently disagrees, said spokesman Kevin Flynn. He said the audit was prompted by an anonymous complaint from someone turned down for financial assistance and that auditors misinterpreted the state laws governing the authority. The relevant state laws do not limit assistance for only housing and employment projects, Flynn said. The laws also mention economic development and give the CDFA discretion to interpret the statute requirements “liberally,” Flynn said.

“We feel we awarded the right projects,” he said. “We feel very confident about the awards we gave.”

A call to the auditing division of the Legislative Budget Assistant, which released the audit Jan. 10, was not returned. The auditors presented their findings, which are advisory, not binding, to lawmakers with this footnote: “While none of our observations make recommendations which might require legislative action, several issues including . . . the scope of and limits on its authority manifested themselves throughout our audit work and may require legislative action to address.”

The spokesman for the state auditing division was not available for comment.

The CDFA supports municipal and nonprofit projects by granting them state tax credits they can sell to businesses through its Community Development Investment Program. (The CDFA also administers a similar program paid for with federal money called Community Development Block Grants, but auditors did not take issue with those awards.)

The state program works this way: If a business buys $10,000 of tax credits from a local project, the project keeps the $10,000 and the business can deduct 75 percent of that amount — $7,250 — from what it owes the state in business taxes. The CDFA relies on a few sources for revenue: It gets $170,000 a year from the state’s general fund and charges the businesses that purchase the tax credits a 20 percent program fee to run the state-award program. It receives federal dollars for the federal Community Development Block Grants.

In fiscal year 2013, the CDFA awarded 28 projects worth $6.5 million through the state program. In their report, state auditors said 15 of those projects, which were worth $4.3 million in tax credits, “did not appear to fit within (CDFA’s) purpose.” Four local projects fell into that category:

- The CDFA gave the Boys & Girls Club of Concord $700,000 in tax credits to expand and renovate its property on Bradley Street and to increase the amount of affordable child care it provides for low-and
moderate-income families. Flynn said the tax credits helped parents obtain jobs because without affordable child care, they could not work.

The auditors concluded the project did not increase housing or employment and therefore may not have been an appropriate use of the tax credits.

- After the Friendly Kitchen burned, its directors and volunteers struggled to raise enough money to rebuild in a new location. The CDFA awarded the project $300,000 in tax credits. The auditors said there was also insufficient evidence that the financial award to the kitchen increased employment or housing.

In its response, the CDFA said rebuilding the soup kitchen reduced demands on local public assistance because the kitchen serves an average of 133 meals a day to homeless and low-income people.

- In 2002, the CDFA approved Early Learning NH for $268,750 in tax credits toward a pilot project to increase the amount of affordable child care across the state. The tax credits were awarded in the last fiscal year and included in the audit. Auditors found the project did not increase housing or employment opportunities.

The CDFA argued this project also reduced reliance on public assistance and contributed to the well-being of the low- and middle-income population it is supposed to serve.

- The fourth project questioned by the auditors involved $125,000 in tax credits awarded to Red River Theatres for its upgrade to digital projection equipment. The theater also did its own fundraising and had said it needed the upgrade to remain viable because movies were going digital.

The CDFA defended this award in its response to the audit, saying the theater has a record of sparking economic activity and retained four full-time jobs and 13 part-time jobs by staying open.

Auditors also questioned the CDFA’s decision around 2000 to buy the Dixon Avenue property it had been renting, saying state law does not give the CDFA that kind of authority. “Owning real property and operating a business does not appear to conform to the CDFA’s original purpose of increasing the number of development projects, providing capital to business ventures and stimulating private investment in areas where primary employment is threatened and housing is inadequate,” auditors wrote.
Flynn said the CDFA disagrees. The authority bought the building after learning its rent was going to increase 10 percent, he said. “It was a smart financial move to, instead of paying rent, to purchase the building,” he said. The CDFA uses part of the property and rents the rest to a kids vaccination organization, accountants and lawyers. In the past, nonprofits have rented the space, Flynn said.

(Annmarie Timmins can be reached at 369-3323 or atimmins@cmonitor.com or on Twitter @annmarietimmins.)

Jeanne Shaheen
Foster's Daily Democrat
Editorial

Shaheen may not be so safe

Writing for The Wall Street Journal, columnist Kimberley A. Strassel has offered yet another reason Granite Staters should think twice about re-electing U.S. Jeanne Shaheen come November.

That reason is Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

The pertinent information comes partway through her column titled: “Harry Reid’s Senate Shutdown.”

Writes Strassel:

“Here’s how the Senate ‘works’ these days. Mr. Reid writes the legislation himself, thereby shutting Republicans out of the committee drafting. Then he outlaws amendments.
“So yes, there are filibusters. They have become the GOP’s only means of protesting Mr. Reid’s total control over what is meant to be a democratic body. It isn’t that the Senate can’t work; it’s that Sen. Reid won’t let it.”

Among other things Strassel’s column serves as a direct response to the Democratic Party allegations the GOP is the “Party of No.”

Strassel starts on the House side of the legislature:

“It’s often said the 113th Congress is on track to become the ‘least productive’ in history — but that tagline obscures crucial details. The Republican House in fact passed more than 200 bills in 2013. Some were minor, and others drew only GOP votes. But nearly a dozen were bipartisan pieces of legislation that drew more than 250 Republicans and Democrats to tackle pressing issues — jobs bills, protections against cyberattack, patent reform, prioritizing funding for pediatric research, and streamlining regulations for pipelines.”

Continuing to zero in on Reid, Strassel notes: “These laws all went to die in Mr. Reid’s Senate graveyard.”

The relevance to all this is that, by re-electing Shaheen, Granite Staters stand to re-elect Reid to his leadership position, unless enough voters in enough states otherwise oust their Democratic senators.

But it does appear, based on a recent poll, Granite Staters may be willing to relieve Shaheen of her senatorial duties and thereby dethrone Reid.

The poll by Public Policy Polling, an unabashedly left-leaning organization, has tried to make light of numbers which show Shaheen outpolling former U.S. Senator and (likely) soon-to-be-Senate primary candidate, Scott Brown, here in New Hampshire by just 3 points — 46-43 percent.

A PPP analysis glosses over the narrow spread by pointing out Brown has a higher negative rating with voters than does Shaheen. PPP numbers show 34 percent have a favorable view of Brown while 40 percent have an unfavorable view.

To our way of thinking, Shaheen’s numbers are nothing to brag about either — 44 percent favorable to 43 percent unfavorable.
In addition, Republicans currently have several candidates among which to spread their favor and disfavor. Democrats have only one.

Also worth considering is the onslaught of campaign commercials which will show Sen. Shaheen on the floor of the U.S. Senate parroting the president’s failed promise — If you like your health insurance you can keep it.

We expect the political weight of her near blind allegiance (95% by some measure) to the president will begin to catch up with her once Republicans have a single candidate.

None of this means Shaheen will be a pushover. But it does mean the notion she is vested with political superpowers which make her invincible is a myth.

On the web:

http://tinyurl.com/WSJ-Reid

http://publicpolicypolling.com/

###

**Marijuana Legalization**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

**Editorial by Joseph McQuaid**

An Editorial - Joseph W. McQuaid, Publisher: Is NH House smoking pot?
The House has done some strange things, usually when led by Democrats as it is now, but this one takes the cake for irresponsible and dangerous behavior.

Were members of the New Hampshire House who voted to legalize, sell and tax marijuana last week actually puffing the stuff at the time? The House has done some strange things, usually when led by Democrats as it is now, but this one takes the cake for irresponsible and dangerous behavior.

Our society, our schools, parents, police, work force, etc., don't have enough to do right now in combating the effects of drug use and abuse?

Idiots are endangering public safety by texting and driving, bumping off the elderly out to get their mail or injuring other drivers. And the House wants to hand them the keys and encourage a joint, too?

Legalizing marijuana encourages more drug use, some of which is contributing to criminal activity that is tying up police, causing rampant burglaries and robberies and that will inevitably get people injured or killed.

To add the absurd to the outrageous, the pro-pot legislators proudly point to its tax-raising potential. What's next, applying the Business Enterprise Tax to prostitution? The governor of Vermont has declared war on heroin. Would the New Hampshire House tax that, too?

No wonder Gov. Maggie Hassan quickly made clear that she would veto a pot bill. To be sure, a minority of Republicans went along, but it is clear that the pro-tax-and-spend element in Hassan's Democratic Party is as strong as ever.

The governor has her own spending agenda, but it is a politically safer gamble to have her administration known for pushing slots than for selling pot.

###

**Marijuana Legalization**

**Valley News via The Los Angeles Times**
Editorial

Marijuana Legalization

What’s the Rush?

The nation’s first experiment with the legal sale of recreational marijuana began Jan. 1 in Colorado, and by all accounts it was pretty mellow. Washington state, where voters legalized marijuana in 2012, will begin permitting pot shops this spring.

Alaska may vote on a marijuana ballot measure in August, and advocates are eyeing Oregon, Arizona and Massachusetts next. Legislators in Vermont and New Hampshire are also debating legalization.

California, too, could reconsider legalization as soon as November. Four initiatives to permit, regulate and tax marijuana have been submitted to the state. It’s unclear whether advocates have the time, money or will to get them on the 2014 ballot or whether they’ll wait for 2016, when there will be a presidential race underway.

Our view is: What’s the rush? Other states are experimenting, so why not wait and see what they learn?

Advocates of legalization believe this is their moment because public attitudes toward marijuana have been softening since 2010, when California voters rejected Proposition 19, which would have allowed recreational use. A Field Poll released in December found that 55 percent of California voters back legalization — the first time there’s been clear majority support.

In reality, marijuana is already practically legal in the state. California’s medical marijuana law allows pretty much anyone who claims to be sick or in pain to get a prescription and fill it at a storefront dispensary. Plus, the state decriminalized possession of the drug, so even people without a medical marijuana card who are caught carrying less than an ounce are charged with an infraction, the equivalent of a ticket.

California didn’t do such a good job when it led the nation on medical marijuana. Look at the confusion that continues to surround the medical marijuana industry in the state. Dispensaries are legal in some cities, not in others. Cities pass ordinances regulating them, courts overturn the rules. Eighteen years after voters passed the
California Compassionate Use Act, and a decade after the Legislature authorized dispensaries, the regulatory environment is still hazy.

Legalizing recreational use would be even trickier. How should it be regulated, from the field to the storefront to the user? Should cities or counties be allowed to ban marijuana shops? Could cannabis be marketed on billboards or in TV commercials? Could people consume it in public? Could landlords prohibit its use in residences? Could an employer fire an employee for having traces of the drug in his or her system? Should there be warning labels on marijuana products? What about people currently serving time in prison for the sale and distribution of marijuana — should their sentences be reconsidered if it becomes legal?

There are also legitimate questions about the potential impact of legalization. Would drug use go up? Would more people become addicted, and what toll would that have on society? Could there be more impaired drivers on the road? Would the state save money if it no longer had to police and prosecute the marijuana industry? Would crime go down?

Proponents of legalization should sit on the sidelines for at least another year or two while the experiment plays out in Colorado and Washington.

Los Angeles Times

###

N.H. State House

The Portsmouth Herald

Letter to the Editor

GOP senators have already cost N.H. $8M

Last fall, all 13 Republican state senators, including our local senator, Nancy Stiles, voted against the Medicaid expansion amendment for New Hampshire, while all 11 Democrats in the Senate voted to support it.
By killing Medicaid expansion, the Republicans denied health care insurance to 49,000 working poor in the Granite State. In addition, the Republicans rejected $2.4 billion from the federal government designed to cover the costs of expanding health insurance to these needy citizens.

The deadline established by the federal government for accepting Medicaid expansion without penalty was Jan. 1, 2014. After that date, $500,000 was deducted per day from the $2.4 billion available to New Hampshire for Medicaid expansion.

As I write this letter, 16 days have elapsed since the deadline. As a result, to this point, the votes against Medicaid expansion cast by state Sen. Nancy Stiles and her Republican colleagues have cost New Hampshire a total of $8 million. That amount will only increase as the days pass by. Medicaid expansion can still be passed in New Hampshire, but the level of support by the federal government will systematically decline over time until the amendment becomes law.

At present, Sen. Stiles and the other state Senate Republicans have both denied health insurance to those in need and also prevented the citizens in New Hampshire from receiving a legitimate return on the tax dollars we send to Washington.

Gary Patton

Hampton

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**NHGOP CLIPS January 20, 2014**

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Executive Council Primary

The New Hampshire Union Leader

Staff

GOP side of ballot to be determined in Executive Council District 1 primary Tuesday

Voters in Executive Council District 1, from the Lakes Region to the Canadian border, will head to the polls on Tuesday in a three-way Republican primary to decide who will square off against the only declared Democratic candidate in the March general election.

The GOP primary features a diverse field, with a former state senator, a former county commissioner and a retired congressional aide hoping to win the Executive Council seat left vacant by the death of longtime Republican Councilor Ray Burton.

Mark Aldrich, 64, of Lebanon was the state director for both U.S. Sens. Gordon Humphrey and Bob Smith for a combined 20 years. Although he has not previously held elected state office, Aldrich told the Union Leader his work as a congressional aide involved extensive constituent service, economic development projects in the North Country, and serving as a liaison between North Country residents and their elected officials.

After leaving Smith's staff, Aldrich worked as a government relations consultant for two years before taking the job as Claremont economic development director in 2002. He worked as a business consultant before retiring in 2010.

"The work of an executive councilor is not dissimilar to the work I did as a congressional aide," he said. "I did a lot of economic development work in the North Country."

Aldrich told the Littleton Courier on Jan. 15 that he opposes the Northern Pass as proposed and believes the lines should be buried wherever they would cause aesthetic problems. "I have an unbending allegiance to keeping our northern New Hampshire natural resources beautiful," he said.

Aldrich has a bachelor's degree from University of New Hampshire and a master's degree in business administration from Southern New Hampshire University.
Former Belknap County commissioner Christopher Boothby, 47, of Meredith, served as an intern for Burton when he was in graduate school at UNH.

"I carry the lessons learned from the internship with me today, and they still influence my approach to work, politics, and non-profit activities," Boothby writes on his website. His career has been primarily with health care organizations. He was executive director at the New Hampshire Brain Injury Association, director of outpatient services at HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital in Concord and director of marketing at the Hunt Community in Nashua.

He also served as director of community affairs, philanthropy and outpatient services at LRG Healthcare.

He and his wife founded Boothby Therapy Services, a company that provides speech and occupational therapy, as well as vision and psychological services, to schools throughout New Hampshire and Vermont.

In 1998, he was elected a Belknap County commissioner, a position he held until 2010. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Maine and a master's degree in public administration from the University of New Hampshire.

Boothby also opposes the Northern Pass.

"As we create our economic future, we must safeguard what makes New Hampshire beautiful and unique," he said. "Rather than compromise our natural resources, we must respect and protect them, knowing that they are an integral part of our economic success."

Former state Sen. Joe Kenney, 53, of Wakefield, has the most experience of the three candidates in elective office, and promotes the fact in his campaign slogan: "Because State House Experience Matters."

Kenney served in the New Hampshire House for four terms from 1994 to 2002, and in the state Senate for three terms from 2002 to 2008. He was the Republican standard-bearer in the 2008 campaign against then-Gov. John Lynch, garnering less than 30 percent of the statewide vote.
A colonel with 30 years in the Marine Corps, Kenney is an Afghanistan and Iraq war veteran. He has an "A" rating with the National Rifle Association and on Jan. 16 was endorsed by the New Hampshire Right To Life Political Action Committee.

He is opposed to the Northern Pass, and said if elected he would strive to provide constituent service "in the tradition of Ray Burton."

The winner of the primary will face Democratic candidate and longtime Grafton County Commissioner Michael Cryans of Hanover in the March election to represent the sprawling Executive Council district that embraces the northern portion of the state, with 108 towns and four cities.

###

**Congressional Candidate Marilinda Garcia**

**The Nashua Telegraph & PolitiFact.com**

**Kevin Landrigan**

**PolitiFactNH: State Rep. Marilinda Garcia says she’s “cut spending” as a legislator**

The cornerstone for any Republican seeking to be the next U.S. Representative for New Hampshire’s Second Congressional District is to come across as an authentic, fiscal conservative. And soon after Salem Republican state Rep. Marilinda Garcia announced that she would enter the Second District race, she touted her cost-cutting chops.

“I cut spending while serving in the state Legislature and will take that much-needed experience to Washington,” Garcia, 30, declared in one of her first post-announcement statements on her Twitter account.

The Telegraph and PolitiFact New Hampshire sought to determine the accuracy of that statement.

State budget votes
Garcia was first elected to the New Hampshire House in 2006 and was a backbencher when Democrats took control of the 400-member body for the first time in nearly a century. Garcia lost her reelection bid in 2008, but quickly won her seat back in a 2009 special election.

Initially, Garcia served on the House Children and Family Law Committee, the panel that oversees divorce, adoption and custody but has essentially no direct impact on state spending matters.

Claiming to cut spending is a pretty broad statement, but we’ll start with the major vote New Hampshire legislators take to increase or cut spending – consideration of the state’s biennial budget.

When Garcia was sworn in on Jan. 3, 2007, the state budget set by her fellow Republicans was $9.3 billion. The subsequent $9.7 billion budget, called for a 4 percent increase for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 was written primarily by Democrats. Garcia voted against it.

The next $11.5 billion budget, also written by Democrats, called for a hefty 19 percent increase in spending for fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Garcia also voted against that.

And the next state budget, crafted by conservative Republicans, including Garcia, after the GOP took over the chamber, cut back spending by more than a billion dollars to $10.3 billion. That budget plan was the first reduction in absolute dollars since World War II. Garcia voted in favor of that budget.

Finally, the most recent $11 billion budget, covering fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and written by a Democratic majority, restored some of the cuts made in the previous budget. Garcia again voted no, though she said he didn’t mind restoring cuts to higher education, public safety and programs for troubled children.

“...I thought with existing recovery of revenues we could add back some of those items,” Garcia said in response to our inquiry about her record of cutting spending. Instead, she said she voted against it because of the removal of the Certificate of Need program that approves all construction projects for hospitals.

“I wanted to see those health care reforms in place, but they got taken out, so that’s why I voted against it,” Garcia said.
Still, her budget votes while in the House are fairly consistent: She’s voted against every budget that called for an increase in spending and supported the one that cut spending.

Other spending

Reviewing Garcia’s entire, seven-year voting record and the bills she sponsored, Garcia consistently supported policies that would cut spending and taxes.

In 2011, she voted to cut the taxes on hotel room rentals and meals and tobacco. She endorsed making it easier for local governments to adopt spending caps and supported banning higher-education spending on New Hampshire Public Television. Last year she opposed raising state taxes on gasoline and tobacco.

In addition, in 2011, Garcia voted for a bill to require agencies propose every two years how they would live with 10 percent cut in state spending. And in 2012, Garcia voted in favor of business tax breaks totaling more than $10 million a year.

She did vote in favor of one bill that could have increased spending at the local level. She voted for House Bill 1305 in 2012 that would have reinstated an exemption from property taxes for telephone and communication company poles and conduits. Critics said this could have led to raising local property taxes $5 million to $6 million statewide to make up the difference. The GOP-led House killed the bill 166-133, with Garcia on the losing end.

Does she deserve credit for cutting spending?

When politicians claim credit for something that happens on their watch, we consider whether that credit is justified before we give the statement a Truth-O-Meter rating. In Garcia’s case, she is a legislator, not an executive, so she can’t unilaterally cut spending. And much of the time, she has been in the minority.

However, during the one session in which she served in the majority, she can make a plausible claim for deserving credit for lower spending. In April 2011, then-House Speaker William O’Brien, a Republican, appointed Garcia to the House Finance Committee. She served on the committee when the state faced an $800 million budgetary hole caused by overly optimistic revenue projections. “We solved it not by raising taxes but by cutting in a responsible way,” Garcia said.
At least one fellow Republican agrees. Former House Chief of Staff Gregory Moore said that “when it comes to budgets, there are three kinds of legislators: Those who believe in smaller government, those who believe in more government and those who are pragmatic on the question from issue to issue. From the outset, Marilinda Garcia came from the first camp.”

Our ruling

Garcia said, “I cut spending while serving in the state Legislature.”

Her voting record on the state budget show that Garcia voted against every budget that increased spending and voted in favor of the O’Brien budget that cut state spending for the first time since World War II.

We found two minor asterisks. Even though she voted against the most recent state budget, she didn’t oppose it because it increased spending – she opposed it because of how it treated a program that governs hospital construction and expansion.

And she supported a bill on telephone and communication company poles and conduits that would have had the effect of raising taxes. Still, there are few, if any, votes she’s taken that would have increased spending or increased the size of government.

On balance, we rate her statement Mostly True.

###

**Congressional Candidate Dan Innis**

**The Nashua Telegraph via The Associated Press**

**Steve Peoples**

NH's Innis one of three gay Republicans facing long odds in House campaigns
MANCHESTER (AP) - Dan Innis' husband persuaded him to run for the U.S. House.

It didn't matter that Innis, a former business school dean, faced an aggressive Democratic incumbent, GOP colleagues who oppose his right to marry, and history - no Republican ever has been openly gay when first elected to Congress.

"He said, 'You've got to do this,'" recalls Innis, running in the 1st Congressional District, which covers most of eastern New Hampshire. "He said, 'You need to take this opportunity and see if you can make a difference.'"

Innis plays down his sexuality as a campaign issue, but acknowledges the historic undertones. He is among three openly gay Republicans nationwide expected to run in this year's midterm elections. None has an easy path to Washington.

Each ultimately must unseat a Democratic incumbent, overcome brushes with hate and confront passionate divisions within the GOP about the way they live their lives. The Republican Party is trying to soften its tone on divisive social issues, but many religious conservatives see homosexuality as immoral.

Innis is married to a man, as is former state Sen. Richard Tisei, R-Mass., who is expected to run again for the northeastern Massachusetts congressional seat he narrowly lost in 2012 to Democratic Rep. John Tierney.

In San Diego, former Republican city councilman Carl DeMaio is challenging first-term Democratic Rep. Scott Peters.

"You can't focus on any of the nasty comments or attacks - not just from far right, also from far left," DeMaio says.

During his unsuccessful 2012 Republican mayoral campaign, DeMaio and his male partner of six years were booed as they walked hand in hand in San Diego's gay pride parade.

"Every once in a while we'll get some hate that is truly over the top - a truly venomous voice mail message. Every time we need a lift-me-up, we play it and chuckle," DeMaio says. "It's just a reminder that what we're fighting for matters."
He is fighting his own party, too.

The GOP's formal platform, as set in its 2012 national convention, declares that "marriage, the union of one man and one woman, must be upheld as the national standard."

Republican opposition to gay marriage has become less visible recently as the GOP works to improve its image and polling suggests that most Americans support same-sex marriage.

Prominent social conservatives such as former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum and Ralph Reed, former leader of the Christian Coalition, declined to be interviewed for this story.

As a senator in 2003, Santorum, a leading candidate in the 2012 presidential primary, compared homosexual acts to child molestation and bestiality.

Last month, Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., drew national attention for pressuring the House Republican campaign arm not to support openly gay candidates. That led House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, to pledge public support for gay Republicans.

Boehner traveled to Massachusetts in 2012 to help raise money for Tisei, who notes that more than 70 members of Congress supported his last campaign.

Still, Tisei says the GOP must do more to change the perception that "we're the party that wants to deny people their rights and interfere with their personal lives."

In particular, he says Republicans need gay members in their ranks to help shift their mindset on key policies. "It would be a lot harder to take positions that discriminate against people when you have (gay) people in the room you work with on a daily basis that you like and know," Tisei says.

Democrats currently have eight openly gay members serving in Congress, including Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who last year became the nation's first openly gay senator.
There have been no openly gay Republicans in Congress since Rep. Jim Kolbe of Arizona retired in 2006. First elected in 1984, Kolbe didn't disclose his sexual orientation until 1996.


In the 2014 election, the number of openly gay House candidates overwhelmingly favors Democrats, according to a list compiled by the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, which works to elect gay candidates at all levels. Of 14 openly gay candidates expected to run, 11 are Democrats, including six incumbents and high-profile challenger Sean Eldridge of New York, the husband of Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes.

Considered top-tier challengers, Tisei and DeMaio recently teamed up to raise money in joint appearances across the country for a newly formed political action committee known as the Equality Leadership Fund. Last month, they traveled to Washington, New York and Florida and expect another tour in the spring.

In New Hampshire, Innis is trying to unseat Democratic incumbent Carol Shea-Porter. But he must first survive a Republican primary contest against Frank Guinta, a former congressman unseated in the last election. With long ties to the business community, Innis is expected to have strong financial backing in an election he says will be decided on fiscal issues.

"The best history we could make would be moving the budget toward balance and getting ourselves to a position where we could invest in our future again," he says.

New Hampshire GOP strategist Jamie Burnett says he doesn't know whether candidates' sexual orientation helps or hurts their electoral prospects.

"Some social conservatives might object, but many Republicans might not care at all and perhaps see it as softening the party's image," he says. "This is unchartered territory in recent New Hampshire Republican politics."

###
State Representative David Campbell (D-Nashua)
The New Hampshire Union Leader
Kimberly Houghton

Nashua duck case: Two aldermen seek commissioner's resignation

NASHUA — Two city officials say Police Commissioner Thomas Pappas should resign because of his involvement with state Rep. David Campbell and an accident in which the lawmaker ran over and killed five ducks.

"Commissioner Pappas should resign, but does not seem inclined to do so," said Alderman Ken Siegel, Ward 9. "... Now, we can only sit idly by and hope that the governor puts ethics ahead of politics."

Members of Nashua's police commission are appointed by the governor.

According to a police report, Campbell had a couple of drinks at a Crowne Plaza restaurant Dec. 23 and then ran over several mallard ducks with his BMW outside the hotel. Pappas, Campbell's friend and attorney, then picked up Campbell from the hotel.

Pappas contacted the police department about two hours after the accident to ask if Campbell could come to the police station the next day.

Campbell pleaded no contest to a charge of illegal taking of waterfowl. He was not charged with drunk driving, and has repeatedly said he was not intoxicated.

"I think the honorable thing would be to step away," Alderman-at-Large Diane Sheehan said of Pappas. "If he is in charge of deciding what is ethical for the police department, then I agree — I think the level of ethics we ask police to stand up to should be followed by its leadership, which needs to do the same."
Pappas, chairman of the Nashua Police Commission, has remained silent about his involvement in Campbell's accident, and has not returned repeated phone calls and emails seeking comment. The remaining two police commissioners — Thomas Maffee and Robert Valade — also are not commenting.

Attorney General Joe Foster said last week that his department is reviewing police reports and audio recordings from the incident to determine whether a further probe is necessary. However, Foster said an official investigation has not yet been opened. Police Chief John Seusing has maintained that Pappas' intervention did not influence Campbell's case.

"The Nashua Police Department looked into this incident at the Crowne Plaza thoroughly, and charged Mr. Campbell with what we thought was the most appropriate charge," Seusing said last week.

Campbell has repeatedly apologized for the incident. He paid a fine of $620 for the violation, a $75 restitution payment and a donation of $695 to New Hampshire Audubon.

###

**Governor Chris Christie/Matt Mowers/Jennifer Horn/Steve Duprey**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

**John DiStaso’s Granite Status**

**John DiStaso's Granite Status: Despite 'Bridgegate,' poll says Granite State Republicans like Chris Christie**

CHRISTIE UPS AND DOWNS. When we last left New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and "Bridgegate" last Sunday, top political experts in the first-in-the-nation presidential primary state were saying the potential Republican candidate would not be hurt by the scandal unless a smoking gun linked him to the George Washington Bridge lane closures.

And a poll of New Hampshire Republican presidential primary voters taken directly after his lengthy "apology" news conference showed support has grown since last September.
But that poll was taken before last week's developments:

-- A Democratic-led New Jersey legislative committee opened a probe by issuing subpoenas for current and former Christie staffers, among others. That was in addition to a probe announced earlier by the state's U.S. Attorney.

The subpoenas for 17 individuals and three organizations seek documents for now, the chairman of the legislative panel said. Christie's office immediately hired its own outside legal team headed by a longtime associate of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani.

-- The executive director of the New Hampshire Republican State Committee, 24-year-old Matt Mowers, was among those subpoenaed. We confirmed Friday that his subpoena at this point also involves only texts and emails, but sources also said it is possible Mowers will be called later to testify.

Mowers, before joining the New Hampshire GOP in November, was a regional campaign director for Christie's successful reelection effort and was identified as the one who approached Democratic Fort Lee, N.J., Mayor Mark Sokolich last spring about endorsing Christie.

Mowers previously served in Christie's governor's office as regional government relations director, and for at least part of that time, his boss was Bridget Anne Kelly, the deputy chief of staff Christie fired.

Mowers has not been accused so far of involvement in the decision to close the approach lanes to the busy bridge, but while refusing to comment, he, too, as of Friday, was in the process of hiring an attorney.

State GOP Chairman Jennifer Horn noted Mowers has not been accused of any wrongdoing, and in a vote of confidence said, "I look forward to his continued service to our party." Another top party official insisted Friday that Mowers "will be fine."

We'll see.

The pre-subpoena poll, taken Jan. 9 to 12 of 528 Republican primary voters by Democratic-leaning Public Policy Polling, had Christie, with 24 percent, ahead of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, each with 12 percent.
When PPP last polled Granite State GOP primary voters, last September, moderate Christie and conservative Paul were in a virtual tie at 19 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

PPP said 89 percent of New Hampshire GOP primary voters said they had heard about the scandal, and 64 percent said their opinion of Christie was the same as it had been before he admitted his administration (though not him personally) ordered the lane closures. Eighteen percent said their opinion of him had gone down, while 14 percent said they actually felt better about him than before.

Christie's favorable/unfavorable rating among GOP primary voters was an impressive 57/27 percent.

Democrats, meanwhile, love Hillary Clinton more than ever. Her support jumped from 57 percent last September to 65 percent, with Vice President Joe Biden a distant second at 10 percent.

But in a head-to-head potential 2016 general election matchup, Clinton leads Christie by only 43 percent to 39 percent, nearly within the 2.7 percent margin of error. The 1,354-voter sample comprised 44 percent independents, 28 percent Democrats and 27 percent Republicans, PPP said.

That's not to say that Christie would not face challenges in the first-primary state should he run, as we pointed out last week, with the help of a few top political experts. That's especially so if any direct Christie links to scandal emerge.

Top Democratic National Committee spokesman Mo Elleithee noted our Jan. 12 report in a nationally circulated memo Friday, adding, "Needless to say, (Bridgegate) is not how Governor Christie wants to be introduced to Granite Staters."

THE HOWARD DEAN PLAYBOOK. Republicans don't like Howard Dean's liberal view of the world, but they sure respect the former Democratic National Committee chairman's party-building abilities.

When Dean headed the DNC from 2005 to 2009, his 50-state strategy revolutionized how the national party applied its resources. Dean recognized the campaign season never truly ends and continued to pour money into state party organizations continually, rather than waiting until the height of an election cycle.
The Republican National Committee is finally catching up.

A wire report last week said the RNC was "getting out of the business of underwriting" state party organizations and doing television ads. The reference to "underwriting" was later removed after the RNC complained that the opposite was true.

Steve Duprey, veteran New Hampshire RNC member and former state party chair, said the RNC intends to dole out dollars differently.

"We learned a lot from 2012," he said. "You can't have these (RNC-funded) 'Victory' efforts, opening eight or 10 offices around the state, start in the final three months of a campaign and be as effective as you need to be. And you can't leave it to the candidates to build their own data bases" identifying voters.

At a meeting of the full 168-member RNC this week, the party budget for 2014 will be reviewed, Duprey said, "and we're going to put a heck of a lot less into these 'Victory' office pushes and campaign pushes in the last three or four months and instead invest the money on an ongoing basis."

He said the RNC has already begun the new approach here and in other states.

Duprey, a confidante of Chairman Reince Priebus, said the RNC began last summer sending the NHGOP $12,000 to $14,000 monthly, which has funded two of the party's four staffers. The two are working exclusively on developing data bases and "strengthening our field operations," he said.

"That had been unheard of in the recent past," Duprey said.

The state Democratic Party, by the way, has 11 staffers; two funded by the DNC.

"Two or three more people doing this for two years in New Hampshire is a lot more effective than having 10 or even 20 people come in for three months," Duprey maintained.

The back-loaded 2012 approach "was too little, too late."
The RNC sent about $1.3 million to its state party in 2012. The state Democratic Party had received $3.2 million from the DNC.

Duprey also said that much of the 2012 funding the NHGOP and other state party organizations received was to support television advertising, but now, he said, "you'll see less of an emphasis on that and more on strengthening and building that database and using it the right way."

Broadcast advertising will be left to the outside advocacy groups, PACS and SuperPACs.

Duprey said Dean's approach to building state party organizations was "how the Democrats turned this from a red to a purple state. The Republicans have now come full circle and we're going back to that. We lost our way."

(SUNDAY AFTERNOON UPDATE: Coincidentally, 10 years ago tonight Dean made the infamous "Dean Scream" in Iowa before heading to New Hampshire where his presidential chances quickly died in the first-in-the-nation primary.

Today, Dean emailed Democracy for America supporters: "When I said we were heading to New Hampshire and South Carolina and Oklahoma... and to Washington, DC to take back the White House... it turns out I wasn't kidding.

"In a funny way, that moment was the launch of the 50 State Strategy -- a leave-no-community-behind framework for change that transformed the Democratic Party in the years to come, fueling my campaign to become DNC Chair in 2005 and the fight to take back Congress in 2006 and the presidency in 2008."

The email's subject line: YEEEEAAAARRRRGGGHHH!!! )

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DEMOCRATIC GRASSROOTS TRAINING. The Democrats have their own association for the chairs of state committees. The Association of State Democratic Chairs has been headed for several years now by New Hampshire's Raymond Buckley.
Ramping up for 2014, ASDC will focus on "communications and digital" organizing at its winter meeting on Feb. 26 in Washington. State chairs and vice chairs will train in the DNC's Media Facility, where Obama prepares for political speeches and debates.

For the next three weeks, the ASDC is hosting weekly webinars focusing on showing state party officials how to effectively coordinate campaigns.

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SEEING PURPLE. Last month, we reported first that veteran political pros Republican Pat Griffin and Democrat Jim Demers were about to head a new Boston office of the nationwide strategic communications and consulting firm Purple Strategies.

With the office in the process of opening, the company's first Granite State event is slated for Jan. 30 at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics. A panel discussion will focus on "the political mood of New Hampshire" looking ahead to the 2014 and 2016 elections.

Joining Griffin and Demers will be Purple Strategies' co-founders, Republican Alex Castellanos and Democrat Steve McMahon, and public opinion research expert Doug Usher.

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RUBENS, TOO. Potential GOP U.S. Senate candidate Scott Brown last week penned his second email in two weeks soliciting donations for the state GOP.

Announced candidate Jim Rubens will soon do the same.

Brown, in a possible further hint of his political plans, cited "legendary statesmen like Senators Styles Bridges, Norris Cotton and Warren Rudman" as evidence of the state's "proud tradition of sending independent and fiscally responsible leaders to Washington."
QUICK TAKES:

-- Sen. Jeanne Shaheen's camp, after reportedly raising $4.5 million in 2013 and $5.8 million since being elected in 2008, announced Friday her Senate office state director, Mike Vlachich, is moving over to manage her campaign. He'll be replaced by Sarah Holmes, a longtime adviser and current special assistant for policy and projects.


-- The conservative issues group Americans for Prosperity-New Hampshire has a new office ready to officially open in downtown Manchester on Wednesday.

-- With a special GOP primary for the District 1 Executive Council seat on tap Tuesday, former state Sen. Joe Kenney said he has won the backing of 14 sitting state House members in the district and plans to air three television ads in the coming days. Former Belknap County Commissioner Christopher Boothby recently unveiled 11 House members and 15 county officials backing him...

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**N.H. Local Ordinances**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

**John Quinn**

State Civil Liberties Union threatens suit over panhandling law in Rochester

ROCHESTER — The New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union is threatening to sue the city if it does not rescind its new panhandling ordinance.
In a letter sent last month to the city attorney, NHCLU staff attorney Gilles Bissonnette said the ordinance is unconstitutional because it “proscribes a wide range of peaceful conduct” in the entire downtown business district. That abridges the right to free speech, he argued.

The NHCLU lawyer contends the ordinance is “plainly targeted, without any valid basis, at the poor and homeless.” And that, he said, violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

Last week, the city council met in non-public session with city attorney Danford Wensley to discuss the letter. City manager Dan Fitzpatrick said he thought it would be “more appropriate” to discuss it privately “under attorney-client privilege.”

While Fitzpatrick said the council did reach some decisions during the private session, he referred the matter to Wensley, who could not be reached for comment.

Police Chief Mike Allen said while the winter weather keeps most people inside, the crackdown on “aggressive” panhandling has been working since it went into effect in July. While he did not participate in the council’s conversation, Allen said police provided the NHCLU with log entries and reports about panhandling dating back to three years before the ordinance went into effect. He said police also provided a second set of reports since it took effect.

While a few of the log entries cite reports of “aggressive panhandling” and people violating “no trespassing orders” since July, Allen said he is not aware of any situations when people have been combative with police or other residents.

Police have only issued warnings to most panhandlers and informed them of the new ordinance, but a few citations were issued since July, according to police records.

Bissonnette said he has been in touch with the city attorney since Tuesday’s meeting. “And we continue to have cooperative discussions about what the next steps may be with respect to the ordinance,” he said.

He said he expects there will be “further consideration” of the issue at the next city council meeting on Feb. 2.
Bissonnette said one problem with the ordinance is that it targets a particular form of peaceful speech in public areas: solicitations for the purpose of "immediately obtaining money or any other object of value."

"What's exceptionally difficult about this particular ordinance is that it's just carve[ing] out peaceful panhandling soliciting activity while allowing other forms of speech and solicitation in those same areas," he said.

That's what lawyers call a "content-based" restriction on speech, he said. And that is something that is "scrutinized at a much higher level by the courts."

There has to be a really good reason to restrict such speech and it can't just be that someone is bothering someone else, Bissonnette said. "When you're trying to carve out certain types of peaceful speech as being prohibited, while allowing other forms of peaceful speech to be lawful, that is going to create grave constitutional concerns, and that's really what we're dealing with here," he said.

While his Dec. 11 letter set a Jan. 3 deadline for the city to respond, Bissonnette said NHCLU is content for now to continue its "constructive dialogue" with Wensley.

Staff reporter Shawne K. Wickham contributed to this report.

###

**Governor Maggie Hassan**

**The Nashua Telegraph**

**Kevin Landrigan**

**Hassan: Grades for NH governor's first year in office**

Grading Gov. Maggie Hassan on her first full year in office as New Hampshire's 81st governor is complicated.
The Exeter Democrat, 54, won hard-fought victories to restore spending for higher education and mental health, producing a two-year freeze on in-state tuition hikes and settling a dangerous federal lawsuit.

But on the two issues on which Hassan spent the most political capital – legalizing a casino and expanding Medicaid – she stumbled badly, as her own party balked at more gambling and Senate Republicans blocked more health care for the poor.

A year ago, Hassan promised to return a tradition of “openness, bipartisanship and collective problem solving” in being sworn in as the second female chief executive in New Hampshire history.

But Hassan openly fought with Senate budget writers, accusing them of slashing spending that would throw the uninsured and sick out on the street. Three weeks after those comments, Hassan signed a state budget that looked much like the one she had railed against.

In the heat of her Medicaid expansion campaign, she went into three home districts of Senate Republicans and tried to browbeat them into endorsing a pending compromise; none of them did.

Most observers expected Hassan to model herself after exiting Democratic Gov. John Lynch, the longest-serving governor in state history.

But on the marquis social and cultural issues of the day – casinos, medical marijuana and the death penalty – Hassan broke with her mentor on all three.

Further, there’s strong evidence that Lynch cared little about feeding the party’s liberal political base, while Hassan cultivated it to great success.

Zandra Rice-Hawkins, who saw Hassan in the trenches as the executive director of the liberal Granite State Progress, thought her toughness set her apart.

“One of the most impressive things about Governor Hassan is that she is a true advocate for the issues she champions for Granite Staters,” Rice-Hawkins said. “She cares deeply about keeping the state fiscally responsible, expanding opportunities for small businesses and providing a safety net for our most vulnerable families.
“She’s not afraid to work towards compromise, but she will draw a line in the sand when necessary.”

Uneventful first year

The Telegraph reached out to more than 25 veteran political observers across the ideological spectrum to try to craft a report card for Hassan’s first year.

Charles Arlinghaus, executive director of the conservative Josiah Bartlett Center for Public Policy, said that a year after Hassan soundly beat Republican Ovide Lamontagne in the election, opinions about her remain all over the lot.

“I think the governor’s first year was neither a hit nor a miss,” Arlinghaus said. “She didn’t have a major accomplishment, but neither did she have a major failure.

“If you liked her before, you still do. If you didn’t, she’s hasn’t changed your mind, either.”

Colin Van Ostern, a Concord Democratic political operative who came onto the Executive Council the same day Hassan took over, said she governed as a pragmatist, choosing competent agency heads even if they were Republicans, doubling the research and development tax credit, and partnering with business leaders.

“Governor Hassan has shown the rare ability to mix civility with determination and to mix Yankee practicality with a clear and forward-looking agenda,” Van Ostern said.

“Those accomplishments don’t always win the political headlines, but they make a tremendous impact on keeping our state such a great place to start a business and raise a family.”

Not surprisingly, Republican State Chairwoman Jennifer Horn characterized Hassan as a polarizing figure who talked a good game about collaboration, but too often tried to enforce her will and failed.
“What a disappointment,” Horn said. “What Granite Staters can see for sure is that she is no John Lynch. Governor Hassan has been unable to get any of her priority initiatives passed, and proven herself to be incapable of the leadership necessary to bring people from both sides of the aisle together.

“Her budget was a disaster; her own party rejected it outright, and the governor was forced to hand over her responsibilities to the Republicans in the Senate.”

New Hampshire voters in November 2012 made navigation less treacherous for Hassan than it had been for Lynch, giving her party control of the House and Executive Council and a bearable 13-11 GOP majority in the Senate.

Then, Senate President Peter Bragdon, R-Milford, an experienced adversary, exited as leader to become CEO of the former Local Government Center.

Also gone were arch-conservative House Speaker Bill O’Brien, R-Mont Vernon, who engineered 14 veto overrides of Lynch bills, and former Gov. John Sununu, the political Svengali as state GOP chairman during the 2010 tsunami that gave his party 3-1 majorities in the Legislature.

“She had the luxury of not having a speaker named O’Brien or a strong personality named Sununu as Republican Party chair,” said Arnie Arnesen, a former Democratic nominee for governor and Congress and a longtime liberal radio talk show host.

Big gamble

Hassan’s greatest miscalculation was thinking she could reverse generations of opposition to expanded gambling and get a casino bill through the Democrat-controlled House.

Hassan, having served as Senate majority leader, knew the upper chamber was wired to back a casino.

Rather than have it rise and fall on its own, Hassan upped the ante, building her two-year state budget and plenty of popular spending programs on proceeds from an $80 million casino license fee.
“When she was inaugurated, she said the state truly needed the gambling money. She was wrong,” said Republican National Committeeman Steve Duprey, of Concord, who co-heads Casino Free New Hampshire, an anti-casino advocacy group.

“Given the fiscal conservatism of O’Brien and Bragdon, no less, we ended with a $72 million surplus, and the budget restored cuts to UNH and hospitals. So her premise for the need for gambling was wrong.”

As expected, the Senate embraced her casino plan by a 2-1 margin, but House Democratic leaders built a budget without the gambling cash and then killed the bill by 35 votes.

It’s worth noting Hassan got 101 Democrats onboard for the casino, better than any previous effort by 40 votes.

And Sen. Jeff Woodburn, D-Dalton, said voters saw the state’s top elected official face bitter defeat and still emerge with the spending priorities she wanted through other means.

“Had it passed, she would have surpassed all modern-day governors for effective leadership,” Woodburn said. “It didn’t happen, but she proved she could handle defeat with grace and seamlessly transition on to other issues.”

Like any governor, Hassan had to weigh in earlier on the budget.

Five months after Hassan had to present a budget, the Senate relied on rosier revenue estimates in a spending plan that largely paid for Hassan’s spending increases without the need for casino cash.

Gregory Moore, a former House chief of staff who is state director of the conservative Americans for Prosperity, believes Hassan remains mired in her former life as a lawmaker.

“Governor Hassan’s first year showed that she hasn’t fully made the transition from a legislative mindset to that of an executive,” Moore said.
“On two of the biggest issues facing the state – expanded casino gaming and transportation funding – the governor said that something needed to be done, but then outsourced the details of those top initiatives to the Legislature, refusing to offer any specific guidance on what the final destination should look like.”

Democratic supporters vigorously disagreed with that characterization. They noted Hassan drove the medical marijuana debate, forcing advocates to remove a grow-your-own option that law enforcement had strongly opposed.

“New Hampshire is becoming increasingly comfortable with consensus-driven, middle-of-the-road Democratic governors, and Governor Hassan fits into this category,” Woodburn said. “But she posses something more: a certain toughness and boldness.

“She clearly enjoys being governor, and while circumspect, she’s proven not to be afraid to take risks and advocate for her priorities. Hassan promised to be an innovative governor, and she has by engaging, not just reacting to, the Legislature.”

Uphill session

With a casino, Medicaid expansion, gas tax/toll increase and death penalty repeal all coming before lawmakers this spring, it’s probably too early to consider a Hassan grade final.

Dante Scala, chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of New Hampshire, said political observers get sucked into the “who’s up, who’s down” watch about which voters could care less.

“Hassan’s first year in office is another example of the disconnect between how New Hampshire voters see the governor and how political insiders do,” Scala said.

Hassan’s policy failures suggest weakness, but Scala said that’s what people here want in their governor – a less than towering figure, someone with small constitutional powers who has to use people skills to persuade them.

“Voters see a governor who hasn’t changed her basic profile on issues, socially liberal, fiscally moderate since taking office,” Scala said. “They see relative peace in Concord, and a recovering economy.”
And like Lynch, Hassan has kept up a busy schedule of state and personal stops to promote the goodwill ambassador part of the job, which translates into public popularity.

“They also see a governor who has followed her predecessor’s lead in terms of relating to the people of her state,” Scala said. “Like Lynch, she treats the governorship as if she were mayor of a small town.”

The University of New Hampshire Survey Center’s latest poll had 57 percent with a favorable opinion of Hassan – not the 78 percent juggernaut Lynch had at the same point, but as good as former Gov. Craig Benson, who was at 58 percent in late 2003 before Lynch beat him a year later.

“Governor Hassan has had a modest first year in office,” center Director Andy Smith said. “She suffered two major legislative defeats – Republicans dictated the budget and gambling failed.

“That said, she made no major mistakes that have weakened her re-election chances, especially as the Republicans have yet to identify a significant contender.”

Prominent Republicans have taken a pass on taking Hassan on – Senate Majority Leader Jeb Bradley, Executive Councilor Chris Sununu, former Congressman Charles Bass, Senate President Chuck Morse, Bedford businessman Chuck Rolocek.

John Stephen, the 2010 nominee, and Bristol conservative activist Andrew Hemingway are still thinking about it.

This opening in part freed Hassan to become vice chairman of the Democratic Governors Association, the partisan enclave that pumped $8 million in attack ads to help defeat Lamontagne and elect her last year.

None of the last four Democratic governors here took on a national party leadership assignment.

Until Hassan wins again, however, many observers say her phantom opponent will remain no Republican at all, but the big-personality, small-“D” Democrat she followed into office.
“Rightly or wrongly, she will be judged by comparing her to her predecessor,” Arlinghaus said. “Her style is much more political than Governor Lynch’s was.

“On the other hand, like Lynch, she has had few bold proposals. Lynch sought to befriend Republican leadership largely, while Hassan treats them like traditional political opponents.

“The result is that 2013 was politically neutral for her. But when you’re an incumbent who won her last election by 12 points, neutral is fine.”

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###

**Governor Maggie Hassan**

**The New Hampshire Union Leader**

**Dan Seufert**

**Gov. Hassan visits Pittsfield school to see impact of redesign plan**

PITTSFIELD — The staff and students at Pittsfield Middle High School on Friday showed Gov. Maggie Hassan how their new way of learning is paying off.

Hassan was witness to the Pittsfield School District Redesign plan, the result of a community effort to improve the schools that began in 2009.

“We didn’t like the results we were getting in the schools,” said John Freeman, SAU 51 superintendent of schools. “The community came together and said ‘we can do better.’”
The school system adopted a “student-centered” learning approach that aims to put students first and empower them to take ownership of their learning. After a “self-discovery” process in which students learn the ways in which they learn best, each student develops individual learning plans, with help and support of fellow students, faculty, and family.

The school’s learning system also includes “extended learning opportunities,” or opportunities for students to earn credits by working for businesses and organizations outside the school.

Aiding in the transition was a three-year, $2 million federal School Improvement Grant and a $200,000 grant the school received from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, Freeman said.

On Friday, Hassan took part in student meetings and met with students afterward.

She was impressed.

“Pittsfield students are taking responsibility for their own futures by engaging in developing their curriculum and by participating in extended learning opportunities outside of the classroom,” she said. “It is an impressive program and I look forward to the students’ progress and success.”

School administrators said her visit was “exciting,” and likely meant a lot to students.

“This is extremely exciting, we are being recognized and acknowledged for transforming our school,” said Tobi Chassie, a district administrator.

Students in attendance also endorsed the redesign.

“It’s engaging, definitely more hands-on than reading from a book,” said sophomore Lilly Plummer.

“It’s been a good change,” said Kyle Hamel, also a sophomore.

“Students get a lot more involved in learning.”
State audit questions tax credit awards to Friendly Kitchen, Boys and Girls Club, Red River Theatres

In a new report, state auditors concluded that 15 of the 28 projects the Community Development Finance Authority supported with tax credits last year, including the Friendly Kitchen and Red River Theatres, do not appear to qualify for the financial assistance under state law largely because they did not target unemployment or housing shortages.

The CDFA, which was created by the Legislature in 1983 but is not a state department, vehemently disagrees, said spokesman Kevin Flynn. He said the audit was prompted by an anonymous complaint from someone turned down for financial assistance and that auditors misinterpreted the state laws governing the authority. The relevant state laws do not limit assistance for only housing and employment projects, Flynn said. The laws also mention economic development and give the CDFA discretion to interpret the statute requirements “liberally,” Flynn said.

“We feel we awarded the right projects,” he said. “We feel very confident about the awards we gave.”

A call to the auditing division of the Legislative Budget Assistant, which released the audit Jan. 10, was not returned. The auditors presented their findings, which are advisory, not binding, to lawmakers with this footnote: “While none of our observations make recommendations which might require legislative action, several issues including . . . the scope of and limits on its authority manifested themselves throughout our audit work and may require legislative action to address.”

The spokesman for the state auditing division was not available for comment.
The CDFA supports municipal and nonprofit projects by granting them state tax credits they can sell to businesses through its Community Development Investment Program. (The CDFA also administers a similar program paid for with federal money called Community Development Block Grants, but auditors did not take issue with those awards.)

The state program works this way: If a business buys $10,000 of tax credits from a local project, the project keeps the $10,000 and the business can deduct 75 percent of that amount — $7,250 — from what it owes the state in business taxes. The CDFA relies on a few sources for revenue: It gets $170,000 a year from the state’s general fund and charges the businesses that purchase the tax credits a 20 percent program fee to run the state-award program. It receives federal dollars for the federal Community Development Block Grants.

In fiscal year 2013, the CDFA awarded 28 projects worth $6.5 million through the state program. In their report, state auditors said 15 of those projects, which were worth $4.3 million in tax credits, “did not appear to fit within (CDFA’s) purpose.” Four local projects fell into that category:

- The CDFA gave the Boys & Girls Club of Concord $700,000 in tax credits to expand and renovate its property on Bradley Street and to increase the amount of affordable child care it provides for low- and moderate-income families. Flynn said the tax credits helped parents obtain jobs because without affordable child care, they could not work.

The auditors concluded the project did not increase housing or employment and therefore may not have been an appropriate use of the tax credits.

- After the Friendly Kitchen burned, its directors and volunteers struggled to raise enough money to rebuild in a new location. The CDFA awarded the project $300,000 in tax credits. The auditors said there was also insufficient evidence that the financial award to the kitchen increased employment or housing.

In its response, the CDFA said rebuilding the soup kitchen reduced demands on local public assistance because the kitchen serves an average of 133 meals a day to homeless and low-income people.

- In 2002, the CDFA approved Early Learning NH for $268,750 in tax credits toward a pilot project to increase the amount of affordable child care across the state. The tax credits were awarded in the last fiscal year and included in the audit. Auditors found the project did not increase housing or employment opportunities.
The CDFA argued this project also reduced reliance on public assistance and contributed to the well-being of the low- and middle-income population it is supposed to serve.

- The fourth project questioned by the auditors involved $125,000 in tax credits awarded to Red River Theatres for its upgrade to digital projection equipment. The theater also did its own fundraising and had said it needed the upgrade to remain viable because movies were going digital.

The CDFA defended this award in its response to the audit, saying the theater has a record of sparking economic activity and retained four full-time jobs and 13 part-time jobs by staying open.

Auditors also questioned the CDFA’s decision around 2000 to buy the Dixon Avenue property it had been renting, saying state law does not give the CDFA that kind of authority. “Owning real property and operating a business does not appear to conform to the CDFA’s original purpose of increasing the number of development projects, providing capital to business ventures and stimulating private investment in areas where primary employment is threatened and housing is inadequate,” auditors wrote.

Flynn said the CDFA disagrees. The authority bought the building after learning its rent was going to increase 10 percent, he said. “It was a smart financial move to, instead of paying rent, to purchase the building,” he said. The CDFA uses part of the property and rents the rest to a kids vaccination organization, accountants and lawyers. In the past, nonprofits have rented the space, Flynn said.

(Annmarie Timmins can be reached at 369-3323 or atimmins@cmonitor.com or on Twitter @annmarietimmins.)

###

Jeanne Shaheen

Foster’s Daily Democrat

Editorial

Shaheen may not be so safe
Writing for The Wall Street Journal, columnist Kimberley A. Strassel has offered yet another reason Granite Staters should think twice about re-electing U.S. Jeanne Shaheen come November.

That reason is Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.

The pertinent information comes partway through her column titled: “Harry Reid’s Senate Shutdown.”

Writes Strassel:

“Here’s how the Senate ‘works’ these days. Mr. Reid writes the legislation himself, thereby shutting Republicans out of the committee drafting. Then he outlaws amendments.

“So yes, there are filibusters. They have become the GOP’s only means of protesting Mr. Reid’s total control over what is meant to be a democratic body. It isn’t that the Senate can’t work; it’s that Sen. Reid won’t let it.”

Among other things Strassel’s column serves as a direct response to the Democratic Party allegations the GOP is the “Party of No.”

Strassel starts on the House side of the legislature:

“It’s often said the 113th Congress is on track to become the ‘least productive’ in history — but that tagline obscures crucial details. The Republican House in fact passed more than 200 bills in 2013. Some were minor, and others drew only GOP votes. But nearly a dozen were bipartisan pieces of legislation that drew more than 250 Republicans and Democrats to tackle pressing issues — jobs bills, protections against cyberattack, patent reform, prioritizing funding for pediatric research, and streamlining regulations for pipelines.”

Continuing to zero in on Reid, Strassel notes: “These laws all went to die in Mr. Reid’s Senate graveyard.”

The relevance to all this is that, by re-electing Shaheen, Granite Staters stand to re-elect Reid to his leadership position, unless enough voters in enough states otherwise oust their Democratic senators.
But it does appear, based on a recent poll, Granite Staters may be willing to relieve Shaheen of her senatorial duties and thereby dethrone Reid.

The poll by Public Policy Polling, an unabashedly left-leaning organization, has tried to make light of numbers which show Shaheen outpolling former U.S. Senator and (likely) soon-to-be-Senate primary candidate, Scott Brown, here in New Hampshire by just 3 points — 46-43 percent.

A PPP analysis glosses over the narrow spread by pointing out Brown has a higher negative rating with voters than does Shaheen. PPP numbers show 34 percent have a favorable view of Brown while 40 percent have an unfavorable view.

To our way of thinking, Shaheen’s numbers are nothing to brag about either — 44 percent favorable to 43 percent unfavorable.

In addition, Republicans currently have several candidates among which to spread their favor and disfavor. Democrats have only one.

Also worth considering is the onslaught of campaign commercials which will show Sen. Shaheen on the floor of the U.S. Senate parroting the president’s failed promise — If you like your health insurance you can keep it.

We expect the political weight of her near blind allegiance (95% by some measure) to the president will begin to catch up with her once Republicans have a single candidate.

None of this means Shaheen will be a pushover. But it does mean the notion she is vested with political superpowers which make her invincible is a myth.

On the web:

http://tinyurl.com/WSJ-Reid
Marijuana Legalization

The New Hampshire Union Leader

Editorial by Joseph McQuaid

An Editorial - Joseph W. McQuaid, Publisher: Is NH House smoking pot?

The House has done some strange things, usually when led by Democrats as it is now, but this one takes the cake for irresponsible and dangerous behavior.

Were members of the New Hampshire House who voted to legalize, sell and tax marijuana last week actually puffing the stuff at the time? The House has done some strange things, usually when led by Democrats as it is now, but this one takes the cake for irresponsible and dangerous behavior.

Our society, our schools, parents, police, work force, etc., don't have enough to do right now in combating the effects of drug use and abuse?

Idiots are endangering public safety by texting and driving, bumping off the elderly out to get their mail or injuring other drivers. And the House wants to hand them the keys and encourage a joint, too?

Legalizing marijuana encourages more drug use, some of which is contributing to criminal activity that is tying up police, causing rampant burglaries and robberies and that will inevitably get people injured or killed.

To add the absurd to the outrageous, the pro-pot legislators proudly point to its tax-raising potential. What's next, applying the Business Enterprise Tax to prostitution? The governor of Vermont has declared war on heroin. Would the New Hampshire House tax that, too?
No wonder Gov. Maggie Hassan quickly made clear that she would veto a pot bill. To be sure, a minority of Republicans went along, but it is clear that the pro-tax-and-spend element in Hassan’s Democratic Party is as strong as ever.

The governor has her own spending agenda, but it is a politically safer gamble to have her administration known for pushing slots than for selling pot.

###

**Marijuana Legalization**

**Valley News**

**Editorial**

**Marijuana Legalization**

**What’s the Rush?**

The nation’s first experiment with the legal sale of recreational marijuana began Jan. 1 in Colorado, and by all accounts it was pretty mellow. Washington state, where voters legalized marijuana in 2012, will begin permitting pot shops this spring.

Alaska may vote on a marijuana ballot measure in August, and advocates are eyeing Oregon, Arizona and Massachusetts next. Legislators in Vermont and New Hampshire are also debating legalization.

California, too, could reconsider legalization as soon as November. Four initiatives to permit, regulate and tax marijuana have been submitted to the state. It’s unclear whether advocates have the time, money or will to get them on the 2014 ballot or whether they’ll wait for 2016, when there will be a presidential race underway.

Our view is: What’s the rush? Other states are experimenting, so why not wait and see what they learn?
Advocates of legalization believe this is their moment because public attitudes toward marijuana have been softening since 2010, when California voters rejected Proposition 19, which would have allowed recreational use. A Field Poll released in December found that 55 percent of California voters back legalization — the first time there’s been clear majority support.

In reality, marijuana is already practically legal in the state. California’s medical marijuana law allows pretty much anyone who claims to be sick or in pain to get a prescription and fill it at a storefront dispensary. Plus, the state decriminalized possession of the drug, so even people without a medical marijuana card who are caught carrying less than an ounce are charged with an infraction, the equivalent of a ticket.

California didn’t do such a good job when it led the nation on medical marijuana. Look at the confusion that continues to surround the medical marijuana industry in the state. Dispensaries are legal in some cities, not in others. Cities pass ordinances regulating them, courts overturn the rules. Eighteen years after voters passed the California Compassionate Use Act, and a decade after the Legislature authorized dispensaries, the regulatory environment is still hazy.

Legalizing recreational use would be even trickier. How should it be regulated, from the field to the storefront to the user? Should cities or counties be allowed to ban marijuana shops? Could cannabis be marketed on billboards or in TV commercials? Could people consume it in public? Could landlords prohibit its use in residences? Could an employer fire an employee for having traces of the drug in his or her system? Should there be warning labels on marijuana products? What about people currently serving time in prison for the sale and distribution of marijuana — should their sentences be reconsidered if it becomes legal?

There are also legitimate questions about the potential impact of legalization. Would drug use go up? Would more people become addicted, and what toll would that have on society? Could there be more impaired drivers on the road? Would the state save money if it no longer had to police and prosecute the marijuana industry? Would crime go down?

Proponents of legalization should sit on the sidelines for at least another year or two while the experiment plays out in Colorado and Washington.

Los Angeles Times

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N.H. State House

The Portsmouth Herald

Letter to the Editor

GOP senators have already cost N.H. $8M

Last fall, all 13 Republican state senators, including our local senator, Nancy Stiles, voted against the Medicaid expansion amendment for New Hampshire, while all 11 Democrats in the Senate voted to support it.

By killing Medicaid expansion, the Republicans denied health care insurance to 49,000 working poor in the Granite State. In addition, the Republicans rejected $2.4 billion from the federal government designed to cover the costs of expanding health insurance to these needy citizens.

The deadline established by the federal government for accepting Medicaid expansion without penalty was Jan. 1, 2014. After that date, $500,000 was deducted per day from the $2.4 billion available to New Hampshire for Medicaid expansion.

As I write this letter, 16 days have elapsed since the deadline. As a result, to this point, the votes against Medicaid expansion cast by state Sen. Nancy Stiles and her Republican colleagues have cost New Hampshire a total of $8 million. That amount will only increase as the days pass by. Medicaid expansion can still be passed in New Hampshire, but the level of support by the federal government will systematically decline over time until the amendment becomes law.

At present, Sen. Stiles and the other state Senate Republicans have both denied health insurance to those in need and also prevented the citizens in New Hampshire from receiving a legitimate return on the tax dollars we send to Washington.

Gary Patton

Hampton
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Todd M. Cheewing  
State Coordinator  
New Hampshire Republican State Committee  

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Concord, NH 03301  
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Fax: 603.225.7498
From: robert.collins88@nhgop.org on behalf of Robert Collins [robert@nhgop.org]
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 10:53 AM
To: Jennifer@nhgop.org; Jp Marzullo; Matt Mowers; rwilliams@jp1strategies.com; Todd Cheewong; Pete Silva
Subject: NHGOP CLIPS Tues., January 21, 2014

NH: Gambling, GMOs, Guns, and Animal Control

The Nashua Telegraph

Kevin Landrigan

NH legislators pack full short week with bills on gun control, gambling, GMOs and animal cruelty

CONCORD – Martin Luther King Jr. Day makes this a short week at the Statehouse but New Hampshire legislative leaders stuffed plenty of action into the remaining days with gun control, right to work and charitable gambling all on tap.

The House of Representatives continues Wednesday slogging through its 2013 leftover bills with spirited debates planned on reporting animal cruelty, labeling genetically engineered foods and banning wind farm or electric power line projects.

Fresh off a shocking vote to pass legislation to legalize marijuana possession, House Speaker Terie Norelli, D-Portsmouth, is hoping last week’s serial rejection of committee recommendations becomes an aberration.

“Before coming in here next week, I recommend you all run around the building a few times,” Norelli said.

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State Rep. Elizabeth Andrews-Ahearn, D-Hampton Falls, aims to make universal criminal background checks before gun possession and make it a criminal violation to sell firearms in a private sale or gun show.

Suspecting a crowd, House Commerce Chairman Ed Butler, D-Hart’s Location, moved Tuesday’s hearing to cavernous Representatives Hall.

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An unsuccessful end likely awaits (SB 217) this measure. It conceivably could squeak through the Republican-led state Senate but has no chance of succeeding in the Democratically controlled House of Representatives.

The New Hampshire AFL-CIO, Norelli and their allies get House panels taking up several of its labor agenda bills this week, including ones to prevent employers from punishing workers who talk about their wages or use credit history to award or reject a job application.

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Though Gov. Maggie Hassan hasn’t weighed in on this one, the first-term Democratic chief executive has harped on the need for state government to support innovation in public and private business.

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In recent months, Trump has encouraged Republican speculation in his home state of New York that he would try to unseat Gov. Andrew Cuomo this fall.

Kevin Landrigan can reached at 321-7040 or klandrigan@nashuatelegraph.com. Also, follow Landrigan on Twitter (@Klandrigan).

###

**NH: Innes one of three Gay Republicans**

The Nashua Telegraph (The Associated Press)
Steve Peoples

NH's Innis one of three gay Republicans facing long odds in House campaigns

MANCHESTER (AP) - Dan Innis' husband persuaded him to run for the U.S. House.

It didn't matter that Innis, a former business school dean, faced an aggressive Democratic incumbent, GOP colleagues who oppose his right to marry, and history - no Republican ever has been openly gay when first elected to Congress.

"He said, 'You've got to do this,'" recalls Innis, running in the 1st Congressional District, which covers most of eastern New Hampshire. "He said, 'You need to take this opportunity and see if you can make a difference.'"

Innis plays down his sexuality as a campaign issue, but acknowledges the historic undertones. He is among three openly gay Republicans nationwide expected to run in this year's midterm elections. None has an easy path to Washington.

Each ultimately must unseat a Democratic incumbent, overcome brushes with hate and confront passionate divisions within the GOP about the way they live their lives. The Republican Party is trying to soften its tone on divisive social issues, but many religious conservatives see homosexuality as immoral.

Innis is married to a man, as is former state Sen. Richard Tisei, R-Mass., who is expected to run again for the northeastern Massachusetts congressional seat he narrowly lost in 2012 to Democratic Rep. John Tierney.

In San Diego, former Republican city councilman Carl DeMaio is challenging first-term Democratic Rep. Scott Peters.

"You can't focus on any of the nasty comments or attacks - not just from far right, also from far left," DeMaio says.

During his unsuccessful 2012 Republican mayoral campaign, DeMaio and his male partner of six years were booed as they walked hand in hand in San Diego's gay pride parade.

"Every once in a while we'll get some hate that is truly over the top - a truly venomous voice mail message. Every time we need a lift-me-up, we play it and chuckle," DeMaio says. "It's just a reminder that what we're fighting for matters."

He is fighting his own party, too.

The GOP's formal platform, as set in its 2012 national convention, declares that "marriage, the union of one man and one woman, must be upheld as the national standard."

Republican opposition to gay marriage has become less visible recently as the GOP works to improve its image and polling suggests that most Americans support same-sex marriage.

Prominent social conservatives such as former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum and Ralph Reed, former leader of the Christian Coalition, declined to be interviewed for this story.
As a senator in 2003, Santorum, a leading candidate in the 2012 presidential primary, compared homosexual acts to child molestation and bestiality.

Last month, Rep. Randy Forbes, R-Va., drew national attention for pressuring the House Republican campaign arm not to support openly gay candidates. That led House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, to pledge public support for gay Republicans.

Boehner traveled to Massachusetts in 2012 to help raise money for Tisei, who notes that more than 70 members of Congress supported his last campaign.

Still, Tisei says the GOP must do more to change the perception that "we're the party that wants to deny people their rights and interfere with their personal lives."

In particular, he says Republicans need gay members in their ranks to help shift their mindset on key policies. "It would be a lot harder to take positions that discriminate against people when you have (gay) people in the room you work with on a daily basis that you like and know," Tisei says.

Democrats currently have eight openly gay members serving in Congress, including Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin, who last year became the nation's first openly gay senator.

There have been no openly gay Republicans in Congress since Rep. Jim Kolbe of Arizona retired in 2006. First elected in 1984, Kolbe didn't disclose his sexual orientation until 1996.


In the 2014 election, the number of openly gay House candidates overwhelmingly favors Democrats, according to a list compiled by the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, which works to elect gay candidates at all levels. Of 14 openly gay candidates expected to run, 11 are Democrats, including six incumbents and high-profile challenger Sean Eldridge of New York, the husband of Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes.

Considered top-tier challengers, Tisei and DeMaio recently teamed up to raise money in joint appearances across the country for a newly formed political action committee known as the Equality Leadership Fund. Last month, they traveled to Washington, New York and Florida and expect another tour in the spring.

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"The best history we could make would be moving the budget toward balance and getting ourselves to a position where we could invest in our future again," he says.

New Hampshire GOP strategist Jamie Burnett says he doesn't know whether candidates' sexual orientation helps or hurts their electoral prospects.

"Some social conservatives might object, but many Republicans might not care at all and perhaps see it as softening the party's image," he says. "This is unchartered territory in recent New Hampshire Republican politics."
### Another NH-NJ Bridgegate Connection

**The Union Leader**

**John DiStaso**

John DiStaso's Granite Status: Another NH-NJ tie: Hoboken Mayor Dawn Zimmer, Christie accuser, is UNH grad

There is another New Hampshire connection to New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and his political troubles in his home state.

MONDAY, JAN. 20: HOBOKEN MAYOR, UNH ALUM. There is another New Hampshire connection to potential 2016 GOP presidential hopeful New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and his troubles in his home state.

Dawn Zimmer, the Democratic mayor of Hoboken, N.J., was brought up in Laconia and is a 1990 graduate of the University of New Hampshire.

Zimmer, 45, is embroiled in the latest Christie controversy. She told CNN on Sunday she is prepared to testify under oath that Christie administration Lieutenant Gov. Kim Guadagno threatened to withhold Superstorm Sandy relief funds from her community unless she supported a real estate project he favored.

Christie spokesman Colin Reed, who, by the way, is a former spokesman for Rye resident and former Massachusetts Sen. Scott Brown, denied Zimmer's allegations. But Zimmer held fast.

In a statement Sunday, Zimmer said she had met with the U.S. Attorney's Office in the region, and, "As they pursue this investigation, I will provide any requested information and testify under oath about the facts of what happened when the Lieutenant Governor came to Hoboken and told me that Sandy aid would be contingent on moving forward with a private development project," she said.

Zimmer said the Christie administration wanted her to approve a project by The Rockefeller Group, a real estate developer with ties to Christie's administration.

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###

**Kelly Ayotte – Luxury Tax Loophole**

**RT**

**Congress members exploiting legal loophole for luxury travel on lobbyists’ dime – report**

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Members of Congress have taken trips to California’s Napa Wine Valley, Colorado ski country, and other hotspots around the US and Puerto Rico – all paid for by companies and corporate representatives hoping to cozy up and hopefully influence politicians.

A law was signed in 2007 aiming to curb such abuse after lawmakers were busted taking paid golf trips to Europe, but some creative scheming has made it possible for politicians to enjoy their weekends outside of Washington.

The New York Times has revealed that political action committee (PACs) and political campaigns controlled by politicians on both sides of the aisle collect money from wealthy donors and corporate executives, and then use that money to fund catering and lodging expenses at swanky resort locations. There, at five star hotels in Las Vegas, Florida, and Bermuda, Democrats and Republicans mingle with executives from an array of businesses.

“That has become kind of the norm,” Vic Fazio, a California congressman-turned-lobbyist, told the Times. “To the average citizen, it might seem like there is a disconnect between the reality of life in America and these getaways.”
Between 50 and 100 lobbyists make generally accompany lawmakers on the trips, donating anywhere from $1,000 to $5,000 to the lawmaker’s PAC for the privilege. Such activity is perfectly legal under current campaign law, a contentious topic that legislators have sought to eliminate, amend, and completely overhaul in recent years.

Reporters from the Times followed Senator Kelly Ayotte, a New Hampshire Republican, on a recent ski trip to Park City, Utah, where she was joined by dozens of lobbyists and executives.

“Anyone who wants to do some runs with me, I would love to,” she said.

Ayotte campaigned as a Tea Party candidate and frequently spoke out against Washington insiders who spent their time with corporate interests. Yet she “kicked off the new year” at the “multimillion-dollar home of Gordon Smith,” a former Oregon senator and current chief executive of the National Association of Broadcasters.

The National Association of Broadcasters currently has a number of issues up for discussion in the Senate and, just three weeks before the Utah trip, Ayotte publicly argued against an auction of the television broadcast spectrum, saying it could hurt TV broadcasters.

Ayotte is like other congressmen and women in that they do not deny partaking in these events but are also reluctant to discuss the details with the press. Steve Duprey, her campaign finance chairman, told the New Hampshire Union Leader that it was “manifestly unfair” for media outlets to report on the story.

Ayotte would have “preferred to stay home in New Hampshire with her family rather than travel to Utah for a day-and-a-half over the Christmas break, but the reality is she has to raise funds in-state and out-of-state for her campaign,” according to spokesman Jeff Grappone.

Yet she, as with the other lawmakers who engage in such activity, seems unlikely to stop associating with so many fat cats unless the PACs can be controlled.

“I hope to make this an annual event,” Ayotte said.
Robert Collins
New Hampshire Republican State Committee
www.nhgop.org
Thanks for doing this

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 21, 2014, at 10:53 AM, Robert Collins <robert@nhgop.org> wrote:

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*The Nashua Telegraph*

**Kevin Landrigan**

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Reporters from the Times followed Senator Kelly Ayotte, a New Hampshire Republican, on a recent ski trip to Park City, Utah, where she was joined by dozens of lobbyists and executives.

Anyone who wants to do some runs with me, I would love to, she said.

Ayotte campaigned as a Tea Party candidate and frequently spoke out against Washington insiders who spent their time with corporate interests. Yet she kicked off the new year at the multimillion-dollar home of Gordon Smith, a former Oregon senator and current chief executive of the National Association of Broadcasters.

The National Association of Broadcasters currently has a number of issues up for discussion on the Senate and, just three weeks before the Utah trip, Ayotte publicly argued against an auction of the television broadcast spectrum, saying it could hurt TV broadcasters.

Ayotte is like other congressmen and women in that they do not deny partaking in these events but are also reluctant to discuss the details with the press. Steve Duprey, her campaign finance chairman, told the New Hampshire Union Leader that it was manifestly unfair for media outlets to report on the story.

Ayotte would have preferred to stay home in New Hampshire with her family rather than travel to Utah for a day-and-a-half over the Christmas break, but the reality is she has to raise funds in-state and out-of-state for her campaign, according to spokesman Jeff Grappone.

Yet she, as with the other lawmakers who engage in such activity, seems unlikely to stop associating with so many fat cats unless the PACs can be controlled.

I hope to make this an annual event, Ayotte said.

Robert Collins
New Hampshire Republican State Committee
www.nhgop.org
How Chris Christie is trying to turn bridge-gate into a partisan scrum. And how it’s working.

Over the weekend, MSNBC’s Steve Kornacki ran an interview with Hoboken Mayor Dawn Zimmer (D) in which she alleged the administration of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie (R) had threatened to withhold Hurricane Sandy relief money unless she agreed to back a development project he favored.

Christie’s office not only denied Zimmer’s allegations -- and CNN documented the fact that her story had changed somewhat from an interview last week -- but also took the time to blast the network on which they first ran. The statement from Christie’s office is lengthy (you can read the whole thing) but here are the key bits:

"MSNBC is a partisan network that has been openly hostile to Governor Christie and almost gleeful in their efforts attacking him, even taking the unprecedented step of producing and airing a nearly three-minute attack ad against him this week."

"MSNBC has dedicated nearly twice as much coverage to Governor Christie over the last week and a half than CNN, and three times as much as Fox News."

What Christie is up to is somewhat obvious but also has the potential to be quite effective. Start with this basic premise: The whole hullabaloo over the traffic closures in Fort Lee made major donors -- Christie’s most obvious "base" in the party -- skittish and amounted to another strike against him among grass-roots conservatives already skeptical of the whole being-nice-to-President-Obama thing.

How do you solve (or at least mitigate) that problem if you are Christie and want to run for president in 2016? Find a common political enemy of course! Done and done.
Republicans -- from major donors to the conservative base -- are deeply skeptical of MSNBC, believing it represents an offshoot of the Democratic party. (Full disclosure: I am under contract with MSNBC and occasionally guest-host for Chuck Todd and Andrea Mitchell. Also, I have many leather-bound books and my apartment smells of rich mahogany.) What better way to turn bridge-gate from an example of, at best, bad judgment in senior staff and out-of-the-loop-ism from the governor himself than to cast the story as nothing more than a partisan witch hunt?

Assuming nothing more comes out -- either in Fort Lee or Hoboken -- that directly implicates Christie (and that's a big "if"), it's a strategy that just might succeed. It's not all that hard to imagine Christie in New Hampshire in 2015 (does he skip Iowa? That's another post), dropping a line like this to huge applause: "I know what it's like to be a target of national Democrats. I know what it's like to be attacked in the court of public opinion. And I've stared them all down -- and won."

As we have said from the start of bridge-gate -- lo those 13 days ago -- Democrats in New Jersey (and nationally) need to be careful not to overplay their hand on the allegations. They have to keep their personal feelings about Christie -- they loathe him -- separate from how they act publicly. Anything they do that has the whiff of partisanship, Christie and his able political team will seize on as a way to paint this controversy as a partisan battle rather than an investigation into wrongdoing in his inner circle. Christie is already moving in that direction. And there's more where that came from.

**Fixbits:**

Jim Messina has signed on as an adviser to Democrat Charlie Crist's campaign for governor of Florida.

Rep. James Lankford (R-Okla.) will run for the seat of retiring Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.). Conservative groups aren't happy.

Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.) and state Attorney General Scott Pruitt (R) won't run for Coburn's seat.

Texas state Sen. Wendy Davis (D) acknowledged errors in the life story she's touted.

Christie's unfavorable rating nationally has doubled from a year ago, according to a new poll.

Mitt Romney defended Christie's handling of the Fort Lee traffic scandal.

Former secretary of state Hillary Rodham Clinton is headed to Florida next month.

Sarah Palin called on President Obama to stop "playing the race card."

**Must-reads:**

"Chris Christie's 1994 ad was too tough (and inaccurate) for Jersey" - David A. Fahrenthold, Washington Post

"'Mitt' documentary shows Romney's many sides" -- Dan Balz, Washington Post

"Going the distance" -- David Remnick, New Yorker
"Christie speaks, and looks for lessons" — Matt Bai, Yahoo News
How Verizon plans to weaken the cable industry’s grip

Five big questions about the massive chemical spill in West Virginia

A big chemical spill that contaminated the water supply of some 300,000 West Virginia residents earlier this month has raised plenty of questions about the way the United States regulates chemicals. Some background: There are more than 84,000 industrial compounds in the United States — and we don’t know all that much about many of [...]
One of the biggest themes at last week's retail confab in New York City — besides the intense gravitational force of Amazon.com ripping the industry from its moorings -- concerned mobile payments. In the future, everyone will just pay for stuff on their phones, right? What does that mean for how retail is set up? [...]  

**Half of taxpayer funded research will soon be available to the public**

Proponents of the open access model for academic research notched a huge victory Thursday night when Congress passed a budget that will make about half of taxpayer-funded research available to the public. (Read more at The Switch.)

**Want to help the middle class? Don’t kill corporate taxes**

This is a guest post from Juan Carlos Suárez Serrato, an economist at Stanford University, and Owen Zidar, an economics doctoral candidate at the University of California-Berkeley. “In recent decades, American workers have suffered one body blow after another.” So writes economist Laurence Kotlikoff, who has just the policy prescription to help those ailing workers: [...]  

**Wonkbook: How Americans feel about inequality**

Welcome to Wonkbook, Ezra Klein and Evan Soltas's morning policy news primer. To subscribe by e-mail, click here. Send comments, criticism, or ideas to Wonkbook at Washpost dot com. To read more by Ezra and his team, go to Wonkblog. Wonkbook’s Number of the Day: 3. That's how many times more expensive it is for Medicaid to pay [...]  

**How toilet paper explains the world**

At different stages in our lives, we require more and less of certain hygienic products: First diapers, then mostly toilet paper and menstrual maintenance items, and as bowels become more difficult to control, a different kind of diaper. It stands to reason that the relative popularity of those product categories would reflect a country's age [...]  

**In 2013, the Fed showed why fiscal policy is still**
important

Last spring, I wrote a piece in Wonkblog saying we’d get to see whether or not the expansion of monetary policy by the Federal Reserve would offset fiscal austerity in 2013. At the time, I concluded that it wasn’t looking too good for the Fed so far, but that QE3 was a smart idea anyway (and should [...] 

The problem for Christie isn’t what his aides did. It’s what they thought he wanted them to do.

Chris Christie’s problem was never that some of his closest aides thought it would be a good idea to punish a mayor by closing lanes on a bridge. Christie’s problem was that some of his closest aides thought he would think it was a good idea to punish a mayor by closing lanes on a bridge. And [...] 

Walgreen’s plan to achieve global drugstore dominance

SAN FRANCISCO -- Walgreen's would like to be your go-to drugstore. Yes, you -- assuming you’re a person who lives on Earth. "We have a global footprint of 11,000 drug stores, 370 distribution centers operating in 25 countries with a pharmacy supply chain unmatched in the world," Walgreen's chief executive Gregory Wasson told investors earlier [...] 

Follow Ezra Klein:
EARLIER ON THE FIX:

Everything you need to know about the Chris Christie investigations

The revolving door between Congress and K Street is moving faster than ever

A video primer on the McDonnell gift scandal

How Americans aren’t as politically moderate as they seem

It’s the “lobbyist” vs Obamacare in Florida’s special election

How Citizens United changed politics, in 7 charts

Obama’s 7 State of the Union talking points, No. 1: Defending Obamacare

Abortion attitudes are a chameleon, and Republicans are trying to adapt

Here’s what the Onion thinks of Ted Cruz

Seven things that are ‘out’ in 2014, according to the Bob McDonnell indictment

Chris Christie’s poll tumble — and why it matters

A longstanding cornerstone of New Jersey Republican Gov. Chris Christie's popularity (and why national GOP strategists are drawn to him) has been his cross-party appeal. But a major traffic scandal has diminished Christie’s luster in the eyes of Democrats — and fast.

Christie’s favorability has plunged 19 percentage points since last November, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton poll of New Jersey voters. Among Democratic voters, it’s down 26. His job approval rating has dipped a whopping 22 points among Democrats, driving the overall drop from 68 percent to 53 percent.
Other recent polls have also shown the bridge scandal, in which aides to Christie snarled traffic from Fort Lee to the George Washington Bridge in an apparent act of political retribution, has whittled Christie's once robust Democratic support, which held up throughout most of 2013. Christie's approval rating among New Jersey Democrats dipped from 47 percent to 38 percent in a Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press poll. Just 36 percent of New Jersey Democratic voters said they approved of the job Christie was doing in a recent Quinnipiac University poll, compared to 55 percent who said they disapproved. That's roughly a 180 degree turnaround from his numbers in early 2013.

Nationally, the news isn't much better. Christie's unfavorable rating rose sharply among independents (+18) and even quicker among Democrats (+25), according to a Pew Research Center-USA Today poll released this week.

Here's why this is such a big deal: Christie has carefully cultivated a reputation as a no-nonsense problem solver who's committed to getting things done -- party affiliation be damned. (Who can forget the images of him touring storm damage with President Obama in the wake of Hurricane Sandy? Or his willingness to lash congressional Republicans for not approving Sandy recovery money quickly enough?)

Working with the other side to get stuff done was a big part of Christie's ticket to a second term. And it's a major part of the lane he occupies leading up to the 2016 presidential election. An appeal beyond Republicans' historically small base in the Garden State is what made Christie such a promising candidate nationally. But after the bridge scandal, that core advantage (or at least the perception of that core advantage) appears to be slipping.

The good news for the governor is that his support among Republicans and independents has held steadier. His approval rating is 83 percent among New Jersey Republicans according to the Rutgers poll. A majority of independents in the state say they approve of the job he's doing. His favorable ratings among Republicans and independents in the Pew poll are unchanged from a year ago. (A Fox News national poll shows troubling signs for Christie among Republicans, but it speaks more about predictions for him than their own ratings of the governor.)

In one way, this could be good for Christie. There's been considerable skepticism about his bipartisan maneuverings among the GOP's conservative base. But if he's no longer viewed as a darling of Democrats, it could boost his cred on the right. (And that explains why his team has been trying to turn the bridge scandal into a partisan scrum.)

The bottom line, though, is that if Christie's appeal to Democrats is diminished, he becomes less of a general election threat in the eyes of Democratic strategists.

There are no other Republicans in the prospective 2016 field who have the demonstrated ability to connect with the other party that Christie does -- with the possible exception of former Florida governor Jeb Bush. If Christie's forfeits that position of strength -- it's too early now to conclude that he has or hasn't -- the lane he occupies probably goes unfilled.

For Democratic operatives with an eye on keeping the White House in 2016, that would be welcome news.

**Fixbits:**

Former Virginia governor Bob McDonnell (R) wants his first court appearance postponed.
Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said Congress will probably need to raise the debt ceiling by late February.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) said Obama is worse than Jimmy Carter.

Oklahoma House Speaker T.W. Shannon (R) is exploring a Senate run.

A bipartisan commission suggested steps to take advantage of technological advances to make voting simpler.

FreedomWorks endorsed Matt Bevin (R) in the Kentucky Senate race.

Rep. Steve Pearce (R-N.M.) writes in his book that a wife is to "voluntarily submit" to her husband.

Super Bowl trash talk between Sens. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) has begun.

Katy Perry said she might have won Wisconsin for Obama.

Must-reads:

"Experts: McDonnell's corruption trial will test line between political favors, official action" -- Carol D. Leonnig and Rosalind S. Helderman, Washington Post

"Should Scott Brown be worried after Executive Council primary results?" -- James Pindell, WMUR
I have to ask...what are your thoughts on this bridge situation?
From: "Peene Ryan" <"=?UTF-8?b?KzE5NzM3Mjc5NTc5?=">  
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2014 1:05 PM  
http://ipad.aol.com/article/2014/01/17/david-wildstein-player-in-nj-bridge-scandal-will-talk-for-immu/20810194/?icid=maing-grid7%257Cmain5%257Cdl1%257Csec1_Link2%2526pLid%253D431534
From: "Miller Kevin" <"=?UTF-8?b?KzE4NTYyNJE1ODUw?="
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:21 PM
http://www.smarterlifestyles.com/2013/10/10/3-major-pitfalls-to-avoid-when-reducing-your-debt-2/
fci_id=78891&fc_app_id=8882&url=http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/01/can_gov_chri
-bridge_scandal.html#incart_river
From: "Miller Kevin" <SECRET>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 2:25 PM

http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2014/01/can_gov_christie_win_a_new_hampshire_primary-bridge_scandal.html#incart_river
Mulshine: At least the Watergate burglars tried to keep their break-in a secret. Christie's men at the Port Authority pulled their dirty trick in front of tens of thousands of Jersey drivers. And they then professed shock when the newspapers started asking questions about it.
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