



GOLD STANDARD



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HOUSE SESSION - THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2017

SB 10-FN, relative to dairy farmer relief.

Environment and Agriculture: OTP/A 18-0

ANTI-LIBERTY: This bill uses \$2 million of NH taxpayer money to bail out dairy producers.

- According to Dot Perkins of the UNH Cooperative Extension, New Hampshire Dairy farmers have a higher cost of production than producers in many other states (<https://tinyurl.com/gvl8o9a>). This is true even in years where there has been no drought. When combined with the Federal Milk Marketing Orders (FMMO) program and the fact that milk is a cross-state commodity, it has been difficult for NH dairy farmers to remain competitive.
- There are many individuals and businesses that have experienced loss in the past year; a number of them, however, try to make the case that they are "special" and deserve protection.
- This bill sets a terrible precedent that when businesses have a bad year, they should look to the state for handouts. Given the overall higher production costs in the state and the market distorting federal programs, it is unlikely that this will be a "one-time" bailout.
- The government has created the issue by mandating pricing policies at the federal level. The solution is not greater government involvement, but letting the free market set the price structure for milk and dairy products. There are a number of industries that are weather-dependent, including but not limited to skiing and tourism.
- This bill is the worst kind of aid: it attempts to help a very small number of people, while hurting the majority of citizens who are paying for this relief.

SB 10

**NAY
OTP/A**

HB 647-FN-LOCAL, establishing education freedom savings accounts for children with disabilities.

Finance: ITL 22-4

PRO-LIBERTY: This bill establishes privately-funded Education Savings Accounts for children with disabilities.

- Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) are funds that children receive to a designated account that are used for specified educational purposes. This particular ESA is limited to students with a disability: children with IEPs or 504 plans. While ESAs are new to New Hampshire, they are not new to other states. Currently, five states offer ESA programs and each is unique with respect to the approved uses, eligibility qualifications, administration, accountability mechanisms, and funding sources.
- ESAs have withstood constitutional challenges. The dollar amount would be 90% of the per-pupil state adequacy amount plus any differentiated aid the home district would receive for students in grades 1 and above; 50% for kindergarten students. With 5% going to administration by a non-profit scholarship organization, the state keeps 5%, which represents a savings. Enrollment is optional.
- The Cato Institute and EdChoice representatives testified that districts would have savings if the ESA amount is less than the variable cost of an education.

HB 647

NAY ITL