

January 15, 2009

Let me start by saying how honored I am to serve as your State Senator. Serving in the New Hampshire House was incredibly rewarding, and I believe the Legislature accomplished many important things last session – expanding access to health care insurance and capping the interest rate on predatory “pay day” lenders among them. I look forward to similarly productive work in the Senate.

This year much attention will be focused on the budget, given the fiscal situation of not only New Hampshire but the entire country as well. Even if federal stimulus aid is received (and I am optimistic that it will be), difficult decisions will need to be made to balance the budget. The State is not alone, of course – counties and towns will be forced to make challenging decisions as well. I assure you that I am aware of the need not to downshift costs to municipalities, and of the need to protect the most vulnerable among us.

This winter, for example, when we feared that people would be confronted with sky-rocketing home-heating fuel costs, the State responded promptly. Answers to your questions about winter heating resources may be found by going to the New Hampshire Stay Warm web site located at <http://www.staywarmnh.org/>. While the cost of fuel has come down recently, the issue is not likely to go away. As such, I have submitted a bill regarding logging in state forests to provide a low-cost heating source to New Hampshire families in need. And in light of the ever-present budget challenges, I have also submitted legislation to study ways municipalities can raise revenue.

In the Senate, I have been assigned to the following committees: Judiciary, Election Law and Public and Municipal Affairs as well as the rules committee. As always, I invite you to contact me to discuss issues of concern, not just in relation to these committees, but any legislative issue. I can be reached at [Matthew.Houde@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:Matthew.Houde@leg.state.nh.us) or 271-2104.

Sincerely,

**Senator Matthew S. Houde**  
District 5  
PO Box 66  
Meriden, NH 03770-0066