



Welcome to our new and improved webpage. Hyperlinks can guide you around what we've posted. We can't yet provide an on-line feedback mechanism, but if you email any of us we will respond, and items of greater interest may get added to this site (time of the honored UVDem chair permitting!).

Below, you will find:

- [photos](#)
- descriptions of our [backgrounds and legislative experience](#),
- [goals](#) for 2010/11 while serving in the NH House, and
- our [accomplishments](#) – some those of us four, others of the coordinated strength provided by the first Democratic sweep in 150 years.

We welcome questions, comments, requests, and assistance with this website.

Your Lebanon Team in Concord

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[Susan Almy](#)



[Franklin Gould](#)



[Laurie Harding](#)



[Andrew White](#)

Goals

Enhancing Quality of Life: improve the lives and self-reliance of NH citizens with appropriate and cost-effective government

Improving Our Environment: increase public & private energy efficiency (including weatherization); reduce reliance on foreign energy sources; reduce air and water pollution

Increasing Jobs and Helping Businesses: save & create private-sector jobs; reduce costs of regulation, health insurance, energy, and transportation; simplify business taxation

Government Efficiency: improve government responsiveness to citizens; reduce duplication; invest in prevention

Preservation of Services: work on sustainable revenue for essential government services; avoid increasing costs to cities, towns and local property-tax payers

Accomplishments

Enhancing Quality of Life: led the nation in [marriage equality](#); increased [educational accountability](#); stopped [slots](#); reduced the developmental-disability [waitlist](#); passed a law to protect children from [cyber-bullying](#); required insurance coverage of [child autism](#) treatments & Medicaid coverage of [Hospice](#)

Improving Our Environment: provided incentives for individuals & businesses to increase [energy efficiency](#) and replace foreign energy sources; improved [wetland mitigation](#); increased penalties on [polluters](#)

Increasing Jobs & Helping Business: passed a [job creation & retention](#) program; protected employees from sudden [lay-offs](#); improved NH business climate (streamlined [environmental regulations](#), [reasonable compensation](#), [1031 exchanges](#), [small business health insurance](#) groups, [copyright & retail protections](#)); accelerated finalization of Lebanon [bridge projects](#)

Government Efficiency: completed first [system-wide computer upgrade](#) in 30 years; initiated [monthly reporting on all state expenditures](#); established process to [streamline procedures](#) & enhance citizen interactions; enacted [corrections reform](#); eliminated 150 on-going [study committees](#)

Preservation of Services: worked to support our neediest citizens & essential services in a [dire budget situation](#); avoided cost-shifting to local [property-tax](#) payers

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Who We Are

Franklin Gould

Address: 58 Elm Street, Lebanon

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Telephone: 448-1660

Legislative: Incumbent, Children & Family Law committee. Running for my second term.

Professional: Retired elementary school teacher, currently a supervisor with the UV Educator Institute. Air Force Veteran. UNH '69, Masters PSU '97. Antioch Law School '71-'73.

Community: Served on Children's Center Board, Program Committee CCBA, Chair Recreation Commission, String of Pearls Committee, president MVREA, foster parent Casey Family Services, member of Dept of Education Language Arts Frameworks & Assessment Committee.

Family: Wife Polly, sons Jenkin (LHS '92) & Franklin (LHS '97), foster son Keith, foster daughter Keisha.

Laurie Harding

Address: 56 Jenkins Road, Lebanon

Email: lharding0625@gmail.com (new!)

Telephone: 448-5206

Legislative: Incumbent, Chair of Executive Departments and Administration committee, and of the ad hoc committee to review state initiated councils and commissions. Sponsored medical trust fund for public employees, Medicaid coverage for Hospice, and drug & alcohol treatment legislation. Worked on best buy procurement for NH. Running for my fourth term.

Professional: BS in nursing from Syracuse, MS from Boston U (focus on community health). Worked at Colby-Sawyer, DHMC & VNA. Currently with Armistead Care Giver Services as a consultant.

Community: Serve on the board of Headrest, and the Advisory Council for Service Link. Served on Wise, United Way, and Healthy NH Foundation boards, and on the Lebanon Master Plan.

Family: Husband Peter Mason (family doctor), daughter Sara Mason (LHS '95), son Dave Mason (LHS '99), significant others and one grandchild.

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Andrew White

Address: 16 Young Street, Lebanon

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Legislative: Incumbent, Public Works & Highways committee. Running for my first full term.

Professional: Career Fire Captain & Paramedic (11 years in Lebanon). Associates Degree in Criminal Justice, Bachelors Degree in Public Safety Management. Fire and Emergency Medical Services Instructor. NH Medal of Valor 2007.

Community: Served on the Board of Directors of the Children's Center of the Upper Valley (2003-2005), Lebanon School Board (Finances & Facilities and Personnel & Negotiations committees, 2007-2010). Lebanon Firefighters Union President (2003-2009).

Family: Wife Melissa, daughter Miranda (5th grader at Seminary Hill).

Susan Almy

Address: 266 Poverty Lane 4B, Lebanon

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Telephone: 448-4769

Legislative: Incumbent, Chair of the Ways & Means committee. Passed bills streamlining government, resolving business tax issues, enabling job, research and development tax credits, DWI prevention and treatment, funding the budget gap, easing workforce housing, homelessness and condo association governance. Running for my (ouch) eighth term.

Professional: worked 22 years as an agricultural researcher/developer, socio-economist, project manager, trainer and evaluator in Africa and Latin America. Taught economic research methods 5 years in Bahia, Brazil. BA Swarthmore College, MA/PhD Stanford University (Anthropology)

Community: Serve on Lebanon Conservation Commission & NH Civil Liberties Union. Served as home owners' association manager, on the Lebanon Airport Advisory Commission, as Grafton County delegation chair, and on UV Housing Coalition.

Family: Father Tom helped re-start Dartmouth Medical School and worked in distance-learning and eldercare, mother Katharine worked to make mental health treatment more accessible in UV, semi-retired sister Chris is now summering here with occasional visits from her family.

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Democratic Accomplishments

you can search for the bill text and voting records by going to http://gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/quick_search.html and entering the right year (default is 2010) and bill number

Enhancing Quality of Life:

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- New Hampshire was the first state, without a court order, to pass marriage equality giving all our citizens and their children legal access to a stable and loving partnership, and improving the ability of partners to take care of each other. HB 436, HB 310, HB 73 (2009)

- We completed the tasks set by our Supreme Court to comply with the state constitutional mandate to provide every child access to an adequate education; after defining and costing-out adequacy, we funded it, and we have developed criteria for school district accountability. While work is still needed, this is the first time since 1999 that the state has not been under Court supervision, re: the Claremont suit. HB 1 (2009), SB 180 (2009)

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- Slots casinos would be destructive to our state's quality of life, our image, and much of our economy. We view the revenues they purportedly offer as a pipe dream. Every term when legalization of casinos and slot machines in New Hampshire has arisen, we have voted the legislation down. SB 489, SS SB 1, HB 593 (1990)

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- We significantly reduced the time on waitlists for those citizens with developmental disabilities and acquired-brain-disabilities (ABD). Despite enormous budget pressures, children with severe disabilities and ABD survivors can now get the around-the-clock care and support they need to recognize their potential as contributing members of society. Many cuts had to be made to the budget, but we did our best to avoid those cuts that did major harm to individuals' quality of life. HB 1 (2009), DHHS statistics

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- We passed a law to protect children from cyber-bullying through the use of electronic devices including telephones, cellular phones, computers, pagers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging and web sites. The legislation also requires school districts to educate staff and volunteers so they will recognize and address all forms of bullying. HB 1523 (2010)

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- We required insurance coverage of child autism treatments. Early intervention will enable many autistic children to get the help they need to grow into capable adults. HB569

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- We provided reimbursement for end-of-life care at home, the last state in the nation to provide Medicaid coverage for Hospice care. SB 42 (2009)

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Improving Our Environment:

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- We have provided the opportunity for towns to establish “clean energy” districts wherein participating households can borrow the money at low municipal interest rates to upgrade their home energy efficiency, repaying through their individual property tax (HB1554). Individual and municipal grant and loan programs are funded through the *Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative* (RGGI) (<http://staywarmnh.org/>). Businesses have access to loans and grants to increase energy efficiency through the Community Development Finance Authority (http://www.nhcdfa.org/web/erp/eef/eef_overview.html) (SS HB 1) and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (<http://www.puc.nh.gov/Sustainable%20Energy/GHGERF.htm>) (HB 1434 (2008)). Both as individuals and as a state we can work to replace foreign energy and help our local budgets.

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- HB 681 provided permanent funding for the Aquatic Resource Mitigation fund, which finances land conservation, preservation or enhancement of wetlands and restoration of streams. Developers can choose to pay into the Fund rather than spend substantial time and expense to comply with wetlands regulations, and the Fund pools money to allow viable mitigation projects – a win-win for both sides. The original program was established in 2006 without a long-term revenue source for the necessary administrative costs.

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- We increased penalties on polluters for oil spills, water pollution, and safe drinking water violations, and outlawed disposal of electronic waste in landfills. HB 537, HB 538, HB 473, HB 338 (respectively, all 2009)

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Increasing Jobs & Helping Business:

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- *New Hampshire Working* is an innovative jobs initiative aimed at helping workers and companies recover from the recession. It is designed to avoid layoffs, help unemployed workers return to work and provide training to help workers get new jobs. Companies that are experiencing low demand for their products can apply to have the unemployment insurance fund pay half of their targeted workers' wages for a set period while the workers continue to work part-time; the fund ends up paying out less than if they were laid off, the company does not lose trained employees, and the employees do not have to search for another job. The fund is also used for job-skills training and temporary subsidy of new jobs for unemployed workers. It has helped keep New Hampshire's unemployment rate well under the national average. SB 501

- We expanded the New Hampshire *WARN* act, which requires businesses larger than 75 employees (now tightened and reduced from 100 employees) to give 60 days' advance notice if they are going to have a massive lay off. SB 40 (2009)

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- We expanded health insurance options for very small employers (SB 390) and continued to work on Health First plans. (SB 540 (2008) and HB 1488)

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- We resolved a long-standing problem about reasonable compensation (taxable earned income). This has been a major difficulty at tax time for businesses that are not set up as corporations, because of the difference between our tax laws and the federal income-tax-based ones. We have relieved low- and middle-earning firms which provide their owners with \$50,000 income or less of any need to deal with the issue, and set in place the federal 162 code, which provides clearer rules for both wealthier firms and our tax department. HB 1607

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- We carved out a unique exemption for 1031 commercial-property exchanges to limited liability companies in our tax laws. These exchanges are untaxed at federal level because a firm simply exchanges one property for another of equal value; the structure of our law did not allow it to occur in a way that is required by many banks of non-corporate firms, and normal business activity was being blocked in NH only. SB 483.

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- We restructured the appeals process for environmental permitting to reduce time and errors. (SB 480) The executive branch, working with the legislature, is also close to completing work on a single-permit system that will greatly reduce the costs to developers and state alike, and is expected to be a national model. Lebanon has volunteered to be one of the pilots.

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- We strengthened the retail theft statute to include penalties for fraudulent retail transactions and dealing in counterfeit goods, as well as enhanced penalties for people who attempt to avoid detection or apprehension during the commission of theft. HB 471 (2009). We also stopped Massachusetts from requiring NH-located businesses with MA branches to identify any MA customers and collect sales tax for them. SB 5 (2009)

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- We helped accelerate the Lebanon projects for the red-listed VT-NH Bridge Street bridge, 12-A, and South Main Street, working both in Concord and locally to eliminate snags and ease difficult side-effects.

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Government Efficiency:

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- Until July 1, 2009, the state was operating several dozen separate and un-linked computer systems, and numerous ad hoc committees had decided it cost too much to fix. To Governor Lynch go the kudos for assembling a crew of flexible and creative experts, a lot of state employee time, and the grit to hang on. Last year we pulled the plug on the old systems and started up the new. It was the first system-wide computer upgrade in 30 years.

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- New Hampshire legislative and executive budget-writers have had to write state budgets without knowing how much money had been spent during the previous year. Accurate spending data came in six months after the end of the year. Not a good way to run a state. At the beginning of June 2010 the new system began producing on-time, on-line monthly reporting on all state expenditures (<http://www.nh.gov/transparency/>). A bi-partisan group created legislation to guide the development of the transparency website (HB 1651).

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- The Governor initiated a LEAN process two years ago across all the departments. With some legislator input, commissioners are meeting regularly and quietly to review all their systems, streamline procedures, and work to make citizen interactions more consumer-friendly. LEAN is a model for cutting down paperwork and other unnecessary steps in a production or service process. The business applications of LEAN were recently starred in the New Hampshire Business Review.

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- We passed the Criminal Justice Reinvestment Act to reduce New Hampshire's exploding recidivism rate, prison population, and cost of incarceration. Research has shown this was largely a function of parolees and probationers failing to meet conditions requiring them to seek treatment for substance abuse or mental illness. The Act redirects a portion of the funds currently spent for incarceration to improve supervision in the community and to provide more community-based treatment for substance abuse and mental health. The Act also provides for quick and firm action when parolees violate release terms, but ensures that anyone released from incarceration be subject to at least nine months of post-release supervision. SB 500

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- We eliminated approximately 150 on-going chartered study and statutory committees during the 2010 legislative session, after extensive study of their current functions and costs to legislative and executive staff. There will be a continuous system of review and new-legislator orientation to provide a lean committee structure in future.

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- In the worst recession since the Great Depression we worked hard in the Legislature to preserve funding of our most vital public services. The budget squeeze was enormous. Health and Human Services make up 31% of our budget. Aid to local governments (and your property tax) via schools, revenue sharing, environmental and highway grants, and local pension subsidies takes 39%. Our resources dropped: the revenue sources available in fiscal year '08 dropped 13% by fiscal year '10. But needs grew: the number of people applying for Medicaid, food stamps, TANF, unemployment insurance, and smaller programs have grown enormously, some categories over 25%. In an ideal world, when poverty, stress, crime and lawsuits grow, there would be more people to administer claims, to run the courts, police the roads and main streets, staff the medical and social service providers who provide our state safety net. But we had to cut staff and reimbursement instead.
- We used two thirds of the federal stimulus money which came at the state level to keep our commitments to schools and county nursing homes, minimizing the impact on property taxes. The rest went to direct Medicaid payments to other health care providers. 39% of state revenues, excluding the state-wide property tax, was spent in this budget as direct aid to towns and school districts. Although we had to cut out the smaller block grant portion of municipal revenue sharing (\$25 million a year, but not the \$60 million rooms & meals tax sharing), we managed to provide more money to local government (municipalities and school districts combined) this term than last. For many localities this reduced property taxes somewhat, though to achieve that end a tight rein had to be kept on school and town spending, as happened in Lebanon. The NH Municipal Association commended us for avoiding property tax impacts in their end-of-session bulletin (p. 2 of http://sz0087.wc.mail.comcast.net/service/home/~2010Bulletin-24.pdf?auth=co&loc=en_US&id=275920&part=2).
- The 30% of the budget left over, after local direct aid and health and human services had been taken out, took major hits. That included human services programs that were not essential to life or federal funding. We managed to reduce cuts to low-income child care and senior volunteer programs, which help people through crisis with major impact for minimal funding. But we cut internal staff positions until each department was screaming, and then required the Governor to find another \$25 million in personnel savings. The administrative floor at Health & Human Services is nearly vacant, because they cut

administrators before cutting direct-care positions. Further cuts took place as the economy and revenues fell even lower, and our local health and social service agencies are hurting. The current anti-tax climate resulted in substantially smaller additions to our tax system than in the last large crisis of 1989-1991, which has made the challenge of providing essential services even harder.

- The NH economy is starting to improve – faster than the nation’s – and revenues will come with it. The budget crisis, however, will last for a term or two more. We are continuing the measures described under [Efficiency](#) to cut internal government costs to the minimum possible. Unfortunately, most of our costs are not internal. We have established a committee to work on proposals to lease or sell off state assets in ways that will not hurt the future of the state, to provide one-time funds. Not a lot can be said about this yet, since business negotiations are impossible if only one party has to reveal all its cards to the other. There are numerous properties the state has accumulated over the years that have no public value, but that may have commercial value. And we have some properties that are income-producing, or capable of being income-producing, which are producing less than they could in private hands, and that may be able to be leased with a net sum paid up front and yet the same revenue or more coming annually into the future in lease payments. In each case the committee has to look also at the public functions of whatever property is involved, and whether they would be lost under a deal. The final decisions can only be made by the next legislature.
- We of Lebanon continue to believe that we must diversify the tax structure – add an income tax on income above the basic cost of living (it must be flat-rate because of our Constitution), cut the property tax and business taxes, while leaving enough to attain the revenue we need to operate a basic government and safety net. That belief is not shared by the majority of the state, although there are signs of growing realization things cannot continue as they are. We will continue to advocate for these issues while we work to make our government as efficient as possible, and to keep our citizens and our citizens’ jobs intact.

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