

RIVIER STUDENTS, FACULTY INVITED TO ATTEND OFFICIAL SIGNING OF NEW BILL AT STATE HOUSE

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Office of Marketing & Communications, Rivier College

Students from Rivier's Policy and Politics class, after actively lobbying for the proposal, were invited to attend the official signing of a new bill, SB 286, into law at the State House on June 12. **Governor John Lynch** signed the bill into law, making New Hampshire the 49th state to adopt legislation to create a controlled drug prescription monitoring program.

Some of the students from the class visited the State House for one of the hearings regarding the bill and listened to testimony for and against the proposal. The New Hampshire Nurses' Association (NHNA) invited the students to attend the official signing. **Bobbie Bagley**, RN, BS, MPH, CPH, and **Judi O'Hara**, RN, MS, CAGS, CNE, both nursing instructors at Rivier, were in attendance at the signing.

Prior to SB 286, New Hampshire was one of only two states that did not have a prescription drug program in place to protect the health and safety of its residents.

"This truly was an amazing event for Rivier," said Bagley. "Our senior nursing students played a pivotal role in getting this bill to be a priority for the NH Nurses' Association."

Bagley added that the senior nursing students from the Policy and Politics class attended a town hall forum in January, where they took part in voting on the bill. It was during this meeting that the students had the opportunity to experience reviewing and voting on legislation that would be the priority focus for the NHNA. The students also made calls to legislators on the issue. In March, the students also visited the State House to meet the legislators who put forth this piece of legislation, including **Committee Chair John Reagan**, **Representative Laurie Harding** and **Senator Jeb Bradley**. They were able to have more discussions on the bill, the process and the challenges over the past five years in trying to get the legislation passed.

"It is a huge victory for New Hampshire to have this legislation in place," said Bagley. "A lot of hard work, patience and perseverance were demonstrated to make this happen. There were many partners involved, but I am glad the students of Rivier were a part of that process."

SB 286 passed due to the large number of votes received, which were attributed to the Nashua site where the students attended the meeting. Other sites included Dartmouth, the seacoast and the western part of the state. Throughout the year, the students had the opportunity to learn about what was happening during the legislative process with the bill, and were encouraged to make phone calls and write to their legislators regarding the importance of passing the bill. ■

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