

To: Executive Council

CC: Governor Margaret Hassan  
Senator Robert Odell  
Representative Amanda Merrill

From: Eric Werme  
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Subject: On the Union Leader's quotes from the Executive Council about the SEC appointments

## Overview

The Union Leader ran an article today with quotes from the Executive Councilors, and I'd like to address some of them myself.

### **“It’s the wrong time and the wrong board.”**

I agree. It's the wrong time because the nominees are sitting legislators and the positions in question are for members of the public who report to their towns – and all the others with similar issues. The SEC is not for people who can work with both sides of the aisle.

### **“... I still go back to the idea they were there when the legislation and the policy were created and were part of the debate in this matter.”**

Yes! They had much influence in this legislation, and it changed quite a bit between the original bill and the one voted upon. (By the way, who added the requirement that one of the public members has to be a member of the NH Bar? I hope they appreciate that's a bit of a challenging attribute, especially as I expect a number of legal proceedings will start this winter related to the soaring price of natural gas. The lawyers will be busy!)

### **“... is a lawmaker considered a member of the public?”**

I confess I haven't researched this one. On the other hand, this shouldn't be a trick question. The nominees hold political office, they have access to more of the State House than I do, they vote on legislation, they don't pay tolls. I think we can all agree that I am a member of the public, I have none of this access. People in public service are (hopefully) serving the public, not themselves. The nominees are not members of the public and seem to be in no hurry to become members of the public.

### **“I believe Sen. Odell has that ability [to be impartial] and the respect from both sides of the aisle.”**

In my previous letter I referred to an op-ed piece he wrote for the Monadnock Transcript, <http://www.ledgertranscript.com/home/5429390-95/column-senate-debate-over-wind-moratorium-white-hot> .

I recommend everyone read that Op-Ed piece, it is strongly biased and I doubt anyone who reads it will call it impartial. Furthermore, I remind you the positions in question are for members of the public and referring to “both sides of the aisle” poisons the relationship by strongly coupling the positions to legislators or at least people who spend a huge amount of time working with the legislature instead of working with their town's government.

## **Conclusion**

I heard through the grapevine that Governor Hassan has taken the appointments off the agenda for the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. This is good news, though I suspect she plans to return the appointments after getting you to see things her way. I hope that proves to be an impossible task.

Sincerely,

Eric Werme

url: <http://wermenh.com/wind/SEC-appt2.pdf>