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CONCORD, N.H. — The New Hampshire Senate voted narrowly on Wednesday to legalize same-sex marriage, paving the way for the state to potentially become the fifth in the nation — and the third this month — to allow gay couples to wed.

The Democratic-controlled Senate voted 13 to 11 in favor of the bill, but only after a last-minute amendment strengthened language granting legal protections for religious groups and organizations that do not want to perform or help carry out same-sex marriages.

The House, which approved the marriage bill by a seven-vote margin last month, must vote on the Senate's amended version. But supporters and opponents predicted that version would pass the House, which is more liberal and was more enthusiastic about same-sex marriage from the start. ...

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