



February 11, 2025

Honorable Chair Berry
House Election Law Committee
Testimony in Opposition to HB 172

Dear Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in Opposition to HB 172. For the record, my name is Krysten Evans and I am the Director of Policy for ABLE NH. ABLE is a disability justice organization and we are a non partisan, non profit organization that fights for the civil and human rights of children and adults with disabilities.

I am here today in strong opposition to HB 172, a bill that seeks to prohibit undeclared voters from affiliating with a political party on the same day as a presidential or state primary election.

This bill is another brick in the wall of voter suppression, an unnecessary barrier that will disproportionately impact voters with disabilities, as well as many other marginalized communities. In New Hampshire, we pride ourselves on civic engagement, on fostering robust participation in our democracy. But this bill does the opposite. It restricts access, it silences voices, and it actively discourages participation.

HB 172 is a solution in search of a problem. There is no evidence that same-day party registration has caused any systemic issues in our elections. What this bill does, however, is create new hurdles for voters who already face enough of them. People with disabilities often cannot predict months in advance which primary they will need or want to participate in. Life circumstances change and limiting when and how voters can affiliate only ensures that fewer people can engage in the democratic process.

For people with disabilities, these barriers are even greater. Many disabled voters already navigate a voting system that is often physically inaccessible, lacks proper accommodations, or is riddled with bureaucratic hurdles that make participating in elections far more difficult than it should be. Those who rely on personal care assistants or paratransit services cannot always plan ahead for logistical issues that may prevent them from voting. People with fluctuating medical conditions do not always know whether they will be able to vote in person or need to change their voting plans. New Hampshire's undeclared voter system gives people flexibility, and that flexibility is essential for full participation in democracy. Taking that away would disproportionately harm voters with disabilities, stripping them of a process that helps ensure their voices are heard.

HB 172 strips away the flexibility that has defined our state's participatory democracy, a flexibility that many voters, especially those with disabilities, rely on.

And let's be very clear: the ability to register and vote in the primary of one's choosing is not just about convenience. It's about equity. It's about ensuring that our democracy is accessible to all voters, not just those who are privileged enough to have stable transportation, predictable schedules, and an uninterrupted ability to participate in elections.

New Hampshire should be leading the nation in protecting and expanding access to the ballot, not putting up more roadblocks. HB 172 is a step in the wrong direction. It limits choice, it discourages participation, and it ignores the reality of voters' lives.

I urge this committee to reject HB 172 and instead focus on measures that ensure every Granite Stater, including those with disabilities, can fully exercise their right to vote.

Sincerely,



Krysten Evans

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