



February 11, 2025

Chairman Berry
House Election Law Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of New Hampshire House Bill 385

Dear Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in Support of HB 385. 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 because New Hampshire's voter registration laws are failing people with disabilities.

I urge you to support HB 385-FN because it is not just a policy change, it is a necessary correction to an unjust system that has denied far too many people their fundamental right to vote.

Right now, people with disabilities are being disenfranchised simply because they cannot easily obtain the paperwork the state demands. Many cannot drive, so they don't have a license. Others face insurmountable barriers to accessing birth certificates or other documentation barriers made worse by financial limitations, mobility challenges, and bureaucratic red tape. Under current law, these citizens, our neighbors, our veterans, our seniors are effectively shut out of the democratic process. That is voter suppression, plain and simple.

The numbers prove it. According to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, 11% of voters with disabilities reported difficulties voting in 2020—nearly three times the rate of non-disabled voters. A Rutgers University study found that voter turnout for people with disabilities lags behind their non-disabled peers by 5.7 percentage points. That gap represents millions of voices silenced—not because they don't care, but because the system is designed to make it harder for them to participate.

HB 385-FN restores the use of a qualified voter affidavit, ensuring that no one is denied the right to vote simply because they lack the right paperwork. It maintains election integrity while making our democracy more accessible. This is not a partisan issue; this is about whether we believe in a government that truly represents all of its people.

New Hampshire has a choice. We can continue to allow outdated laws to disenfranchise disabled voters, or we can choose fairness, inclusion, and democracy. I urge you to vote yes on HB 385-FN. The voices of people with disabilities matter. Their votes matter. And their rights must be protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Krysten Evans".

Krysten Evans

Krysten@ABLENH.org

Sources:

Election Assistance Commission. Disability and Voting Accessibility Survey: 2020 Elections. U.S. Election Assistance Commission, 2021.

Schur, Lisa, and Douglas Kruse. Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2020 Elections. Program for Disability Research, Rutgers University, 2021.