



February 4, 2025

Honorable Chairman Berry  
House Election Law Committee  
Subject: Testimony in Opposition of New Hampshire House Bill 418

Dear Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in Opposition of HB 418. 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.

We are in strong opposition to HB 418, which seeks to severely restrict access to absentee voting in New Hampshire by eliminating work obligations, childcare responsibilities, and religious observance as valid reasons to vote absentee.

At ABLE NH, we work to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to all aspects of civic life, including the fundamental right to vote. This bill creates an undue burden for many eligible voters, particularly those with disabilities who rely on absentee registration and voting to exercise their rights.

This legislation is an affront to the very foundation of our democracy. The right to vote is not a privilege reserved only for those with the flexibility to stand in line on Election Day; it is a fundamental right that must be accessible to all eligible voters. HB 418 erects unnecessary barriers, disproportionately impacting working-class Granite Staters, parents, caregivers, and those who practice faith traditions that observe religious prohibitions on Election Day.

Most concerning, this bill places an undue burden on people with disabilities. While the legislation still allows absentee voting for disability related reasons, narrowing the law isolates and stigmatizes voters with disabilities. The ability to access absentee ballots should not require individuals to disclose their medical conditions, nor should we create a system that forces voters to prove the legitimacy of their personal obligations before casting their ballot.

Restricting absentee voting is a direct attack on the civic participation of those already marginalized in our electoral system. In a state that prides itself on voter engagement and participation, HB 418 moves us in the wrong direction. The COVID-19 pandemic made it clear that expanded access to absentee ballots strengthens democracy, it does not weaken it. The ability to vote should not be dictated by one's work schedule, access to childcare, or religious beliefs.

At ABLE NH, we believe in building a New Hampshire that is inclusive and equitable. HB 418 is neither. I urge this committee to reject this harmful legislation and instead focus on policies that expand, rather than restrict, the right to vote. Our democracy is strongest when every eligible voter can participate, without unnecessary obstacles standing in their way.

Thank you for your time. I welcome any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krysten Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krysten Evans

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