



January 21, 2025

Chairman Berry

House Election Law and Municipal Affairs

Subject: Testimony in Support of New Hampshire House Bill 67

Dear Honorable Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in Support of HB 67. 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.

House Bill 67 is a critical piece of legislation that transitions the use of accessible voting machines from a trial phase to a permanent law, ensuring ongoing accessibility for voters with disabilities. By solidifying this requirement, the bill guarantees that individuals with disabilities can independently and privately cast their ballots during elections, fostering inclusivity and upholding their fundamental voting rights. This legislative change reflects a commitment to equity in the democratic process, removing barriers and creating a consistent framework for accessible voting across all future elections.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 40 million Americans have a disability that impacts their daily life activities. Despite legal protections such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals with disabilities continue to face barriers when exercising their right to vote.

Research conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has identified various barriers that individuals with disabilities encounter when attempting to vote, including inaccessible polling places, lack of accessible voting equipment, and insufficient training for poll workers.

Studies have shown that the availability of accessible voting systems significantly improves voter turnout and satisfaction among individuals with disabilities. According to research published in the Journal of Disability Policy Studies, jurisdictions with accessible voting technology experienced higher rates of voter participation among individuals with disabilities compared to those without such technology.

House Bill 67 aligns with existing legal mandates, including the ADA and the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which require states to ensure equal access to the electoral process for individuals with disabilities. By codifying accessible voting systems in state law and mandating their provision, New Hampshire can demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling these obligations.

In conclusion, House Bill 67 represents a crucial step towards promoting inclusivity, accessibility, and equality in the electoral process. By providing individuals with disabilities the means to cast their votes privately and independently, New Hampshire can uphold the fundamental principles of democracy and ensure that all eligible voters have a voice in shaping their communities and their future.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of this important legislation. I urge the committee to vote in favor of House Bill 67 and take a decisive stand for fairness, equality, and democratic principles.

Sincerely,



Krysten Evans

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Sources:

- U.S. Census Bureau. "Americans With Disabilities: 2014." Census.gov.
- Government Accountability Office. "Issues Related to State Voter Identification Laws." GAO.gov.
- Langley, Rachel E., et al. "Voting accessibility for people with disabilities: The impact of voting technology on blind and visually impaired individuals." Journal of Disability Policy Studies, vol. 27, no. 3, 2016, pp. 156-165.