

# Senate Judiciary Committee

*Brendan Bunnell 271-4063*

**SB 521-FN**, relative to unauthorized camping on private property.

**Hearing Date:** January 8, 2026

**Time Opened:** 1:47 p.m.

**Time Closed:** 1:58 p.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Gannon, Abbas, Carson, Altschiller and Reardon

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis:** This bill prohibits camping without permission on another's private property and adds penalties for such violations.

---

**Sponsors:**

Sen. Reardon

Sen. McGough

Sen. Lang

Sen. Long

Sen. Avarad

Sen. Ward

Sen. Ricciardi

Sen. Altschiller

---

**Who supports the bill:** Sen. Tara Reardon (SD-15), Steve Duprey, Sen. Tim McGough (SD-11), Sen. Ruth Ward (SD-8), and Sen. Debra Altschiller (SD-24).

**Who opposes the bill:** Dawn McKinney (NH Legal Assistance)

**Who is neutral on the bill:** None

**Summary of testimony presented:**

**Senator Reardon (SD-15)**, explained that current law prohibited camping on public property and rights-of-way but did not cover private property. Stated that SB 521-FN would apply to 11 cities and 18 towns with a population over 10,000 and would allow landowners to remove unauthorized campers more quickly without waiting for a no-trespass order. Highlighted that cleanup of camps in Concord had cost over \$1.5 million due to hazardous waste. Emphasized that the bill aimed to reduce costs for property owners and asked the committee to support it.

- Senator Gannon asked where people who were removed from private property would go and what alternatives they would have.
  - o Senator Reardon clarified that SB 521-FN did not solve social service or homelessness issues but focused on relieving private landowners of

the burden. Explained that without this tool, owners had to navigate a lengthy process that left campers on their property for days.

- Senator Abbas asked whether under current law a posted “No Trespassing” sign was sufficient to remove someone from private property without additional legal steps.

**Steve Duprey**, a Concord New Hampshire resident, explained that even posted signs required police action and a formal do-not-trespass order. He emphasized the time gap between filing the order and enforcement, which allowed unauthorized campers to remain on property. Gave examples from Concord, including a case where people moved from a closed campground to his parking lot, and it took police 10 days to serve the no-trespass order with cleanup costs exceeding \$50,000 due to hazardous waste. Noted that large municipalities faced repeated unauthorized camping and that current protections were insufficient for private property. Explained that the bill would streamline enforcement, target municipalities over 10,000 people to avoid overburdening smaller towns, and could direct homeless individuals to available services. Noted additional costs for security and property protection that would be reduced by the bill.

- Senator Carson asked whether SB 521-FN would address liability concerns for property owners if someone were injured on their land, noting that owners of large parcels were concerned about lawsuits.
  - Steve Duprey responded that the bill would help reduce liability risks but would not eliminate them entirely. Shared a personal incident where a person with mental health issues on his property assaulted a visitor, and the owners received a notice of intent to sue because they were unaware of the person’s presence.
- Senator Abbas asked whether the main issue was enforcement of existing trespassing laws, since clearly posted signs should theoretically allow removal of campers.
  - Steve Duprey clarified that posting signs on large properties was impractical and often ignored by homeless individuals. Noted that current law requires multiple signs in specific locations, creating enforcement gaps. Stated that the bill provided police with an easier tool to act promptly, avoiding delays and reducing costs.
- Senator Reardon added that residential properties were also affected, not just commercial properties. Gave an example of a backyard camp appearing next to a home, which required police intervention and hazardous waste cleanup, leaving the family unable to safely use their property for weeks.