

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Sophie Walsh 271-3469

SB 453, authorizing advanced practice registered nurses and physician associates to make certain certifications.

Hearing Date: March 4, 2026

Time Opened: 10:53 a.m.

Time Closed: 11:02 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Rochefort, Avard, Birdsell, Prentiss and Long

Members of the Committee Absent: None

Bill Analysis: This bill adds advanced practice registered nurses and physician associates as medical professionals who can:

I. Document a lasting medical necessity, which allows for a vehicle equipment waiver for persons with disabilities to be granted for 4 years instead of 2 years; and

II. Exempt a child from certain required immunizations if they find that the immunization may be detrimental to the child's health.

Sponsors:

Sen. Prentiss

Sen. Rosenwald

Sen. Watters

Sen. Birdsell

Sen. Avard

Sen. Perkins Kwoka

Sen. Lang

Sen. Gannon

Sen. Pearl

Sen. Ward

Sen. Sullivan

Sen. McGough

Sen. Murphy

Sen. Innis

Sen. Rochefort

Sen. Fenton

Who supports the bill: Sen. Prentiss, Sen. Innis, Sen. Ward, Sen. Pearl, Sen. Fenton, Sen. Rosenwald, Aubrey Freedman, Cory Stone, Jennifer Favreau, Curtis Howland, Timothy Finney, and Pamela Harders.

Who opposes the bill: Kathleen Malsbenden, Jenny Bourgeois, Heather Gollnick, Lisa Willis, Thomas Stewart, Susan Peterson, Cynthia Rodenhauser Stewart, Lorraine Drake, Stan Duncan, and Victoria Diehl.

Who is neutral on the bill: Kim Mohan (New Hampshire Nurse Practitioner Association).

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator Sue Prentiss, Senate District 5

- Senator Prentiss explained that this bill is focused on increasing access and efficiency in health care by allowing advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician associates (PAs) to perform certifications that can currently only be done by physicians.
- The bill contains two fundamental changes. One is in relation to vehicle equipment waivers for people with disabilities, for things such as hand controls or pedal extensions. The other is in relation to medical immunization exemptions for children, which may be needed if there is a determined negative impact or harm to the child. Since only physicians can currently sign for these waivers and exemptions, this change will bring some equity between physicians, APRNs, and PAs.
- Senator Prentiss emphasized that these providers are already providing comparable care in these areas, and this change simply allows for them to provide comparable signatures as well.
- This change would reduce delays for patients needing these waivers and exemptions.

Aubrey Freedman

- Mr. Freedman stated that he is speaking in support of the bill.
- This will make health care easier and more accessible for patients.
- Mr. Freedman does not believe this is a public health or safety issue.
- This would be especially useful in rural areas, as it allows for more flexibility.
- Mr. Freedman acknowledged that there is a health care workforce shortage in New Hampshire. Allowing trained and knowledgeable APRNs and PAs to do these tasks will free up physicians for other matters.

Kim Mohan, New Hampshire Nurse Practitioner Association

- Ms. Mohan explained that APRNs are the preferred providers for many individuals in New Hampshire and described PAs as incredible resources for the primary care network.
- Legislation was passed years ago allowing for APRNs to sign on lines that require a physician signature, if it fits within their scope of practice. However, there has been some confusion since then.
- This bill would clear up that confusion and extend these responsibilities to qualified APRNs and PAs.