



Testimony of New Hampshire Families for Vaccines (NHFV)
In Opposition to HB 1719-FN
House Health, Human Services, and Elderly Affairs Committee

Wednesday, January 14, 2026

Chairman MacDonald and Members of the Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **opposition to HB 1719-FN**, which would remove hepatitis B from New Hampshire's required childhood immunization schedule.

New Hampshire Families for Vaccines (NHFV) is a statewide chapter of families, clinicians, and advocates who support evidence-based vaccine policy and work to ensure children in New Hampshire are protected from preventable disease.

HB 1719-FN would remove a vaccine requirement that has been highly effective in protecting children's health and preventing serious disease.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection that can cause chronic liver disease, cirrhosis, and liver cancer. Children infected at a young age are especially vulnerable. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, up to 90% of infants infected before age one develop chronic hepatitis B, and 15–25% of those individuals die prematurely from complications of the disease.¹ Because early infection is often asymptomatic, vaccination in infancy is a critical prevention strategy.

New Hampshire's current policy has been successful. Nearly 94.7% of New Hampshire children are fully vaccinated against hepatitis B by age two, and vaccination rates increased substantially after the vaccine became a requirement for childcare enrollment in the 1990s. As a result, New Hampshire has one of the lowest rates of hepatitis B in the country, with 0.1 newly reported acute cases and 0.1 newly reported chronic cases per 100,000 people in 2021.² This is a public health success story.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "CDC adopts individual-based decision-making for hepatitis B immunization." Press release, 2025.

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2025/2025-hepatitis-b-immunization.html>

² New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. Hepatitis B surveillance data, 2021.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/disease-prevention/nh-immunization-program>

After the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revised its recommendations at the federal level, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services publicly reaffirmed its support for hepatitis B vaccination, stating that healthy, medically stable newborns should continue to receive the birth dose within the first 24 hours of life. NH DHHS has also stated that it will continue following expert recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, both of which continue to recommend hepatitis B vaccination for all children.³

HB 1719-FN would place state law in direct conflict with that expert guidance.

Removing hepatitis B from the list of required vaccines would weaken the clarity and consistency of New Hampshire's immunization framework. School and childcare vaccine requirements work best when they are predictable, straightforward, and grounded in longstanding scientific consensus. Removing a single vaccine requirement risks increased confusion for families, providers, and schools and could lead to lower vaccination coverage over time.

Finally, the bill's fiscal note acknowledges that any short-term savings from reduced vaccine purchasing may be offset by significant indirect costs associated with outbreak investigation and emergency response. The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services estimates these costs could range from \$100,000 to \$350,000 per outbreak, with the possibility of multiple outbreaks per year.⁴

HB 1719-FN is unnecessary, contradicts the advice of New Hampshire's own health experts, and would reverse decades of progress in preventing a serious and preventable disease.

For these reasons, New Hampshire Families for Vaccines respectfully urges the committee to vote Ought Not to Pass on HB 1719-FN and to maintain New Hampshire's evidence-based childhood immunization requirements.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Victoria Shaheen
Founder, New Hampshire Families for Vaccines

³ New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. "Hepatitis B vaccine recommendations." Health Alert Network advisory.

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt476/files/documents2/han-hepatitis-b-vaccine-recommendations.pdf>

⁴ New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. Fiscal note for HB 1719-FN (outbreak investigation and response cost estimates).