



January 15, 2026

Chair Layon  
House Executive Departments and Administration Committee  
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1609

Dear Honorable Chair and members of the committee,

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 fight for the civil and human rights of people with disabilities in NH. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of HB 1609.

From a disability perspective, this bill is about preventing foreseeable harm. People with disabilities are disproportionately harmed in detention settings, particularly those with physical disabilities, intellectual and developmental disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, and chronic medical conditions. These facilities are not built to provide accessibility, continuity of care, or legally required accommodations.

HB 1609 ensures that state, county, and municipal funds and property are not used to construct or operate immigrant detention facilities, including those run by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This matters because detention settings routinely disrupt the supports people with disabilities rely on to survive, medications, mobility devices, mental health treatment, communication supports, and personal care. When those supports are interrupted, health deteriorates quickly and sometimes permanently.

Disability does not disappear in detention. It becomes more dangerous. Confinement increases the risk of medical neglect, psychiatric crisis, and serious injury. These are not isolated incidents. They are predictable outcomes of placing people with disabilities in environments that cannot meet their needs.

HB 1609 draws a clear and responsible boundary around the use of public resources. It does not regulate immigration policy. It ensures that taxpayer dollars and public property are not used to support systems that consistently fail to meet basic standards of disability access and care.

New Hampshire has worked to reduce institutional harm and promote community-based supports for people with disabilities. Funding detention facilities moves in the opposite direction. HB 1609 aligns our spending with our responsibility to protect vulnerable people from preventable harm.

I urge the committee to support HB 1609.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Krysten M. Evans  
Director of Policy  
Krysten@ABLENH.org