



New Hampshire Firearms Coalition

NH's Only No-Compromise Gun Rights Organization

January 20, 2026

**House Children and Family Law Committee
New Hampshire House of Representatives
State House**

Concord, NH 03301

**Re: HB1185 – Relative to the offense of endangering the welfare of a child or incompetent – Strong
Opposition**

Dear Chair Debra DeSimone and Members House Children and Family Law Committee

The New Hampshire Firearms Coalition (NHFC), the state's only no-compromise organization dedicated to defending absolute Second Amendment rights, writes to express our strong opposition to HB1185.

This bill amends RSA 639:3 by redefining the crime of endangering the welfare of a child or incompetent person. It establishes liability for negligent or knowing conduct that exposes a child under 18 (or an incompetent person) to a substantial and unjustifiable risk of serious bodily injury or death, with penalties escalating from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class B felony for repeat offenses, and up to a Class A felony if the conduct results in serious injury or death.

While NHFC fully supports the protection of children from genuine harm, the bill's broad and potentially vague language creates significant risks of overbroad application. Specifically, it could criminalize responsible, lawful firearm ownership, secure storage, transportation, or possession by parents, guardians, or other adults who owe a duty of care—conduct that does not involve recklessness, intent to harm, or actual endangerment. For example, everyday lawful activities such as keeping a securely stored firearm in the home, teaching safe firearms handling to minors under supervision, or possessing a firearm for self-defense in proximity to children could be construed subjectively as exposing a child to "substantial and unjustifiable risk," leading to felony charges without clear evidentiary thresholds.

This overreach threatens to infringe on the constitutional right to keep and bear arms under both the U.S. and New Hampshire Constitutions, particularly in a state that upholds constitutional carry, strong preemption of local firearm regulations, and the fundamental role of armed self-defense for family protection. Existing statutes already address true endangerment; expanding criminal liability in this manner risks chilling the exercise of Second Amendment rights and eroding parental autonomy without commensurate public safety gains.

We respectfully urge the Committee to recommend that HB1185 be found "Inexpedient to Legislate" (ITL). Should the bill advance, we strongly recommend amendments to explicitly exclude application to lawful firearm possession, storage, or use that lacks clear recklessness or direct endangerment.

NHFC representatives are prepared to provide testimony, respond to questions, or supply additional information during the hearing process. Thank you for your careful consideration and for upholding the constitutional rights of Granite Staters.

Sincerely,

JR Hoell, Secretary
New Hampshire Firearms Coalition
Dunbarton, New Hampshire