



January 28, 2026

Honorable Chairwoman Layon
NH House Executive Departments and Administration Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1544

Dear Honorable Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1544. For the record my name is Krysten Evans, and I am the Director of Policy for ABLE NH, a statewide disability justice organization that works to protect and expand the civil and human rights of people with disabilities across New Hampshire. I am here today in strong support of House Bill 1544.

This bill is about dignity, access, and safety.

Every day, people with disabilities walk into public buildings simply trying to live their lives. They go to attend hearings, access services, apply for benefits, meet with state agencies, advocate for themselves, or care for their families. For many, that act alone requires extraordinary effort. For those with asthma, chemical sensitivities, autoimmune disorders, migraines, PTSD, or respiratory conditions, exposure to artificial fragrances is not a minor inconvenience. It is a serious health risk.

Scented products trigger asthma attacks, neurological symptoms, migraines, breathing distress, nausea, vertigo, and cognitive impairment. For some people, they trigger medical emergencies. For others, they create conditions so intolerable that they are forced to leave public spaces entirely. This results in exclusion from civic life, barriers to public participation, and denial of access to government services.

That is discrimination.

Fragrance exposure disproportionately impacts people with disabilities. It limits access to public hearings, employment opportunities, healthcare, public assistance, voting, and civic participation. In short, it blocks people from fully belonging in their own communities.

House Bill 1544 removes that barrier.

By establishing fragrance-free policies in state buildings open to the public, this bill ensures that people with disabilities are not forced to choose between their health and their right to participate in government. It affirms that accessibility includes environmental safety, not just physical ramps and doorways.

This bill is reasonable. It is evidence-based. And it is long overdue.

The American Medical Association, the Centers for Disease Control, and leading public health institutions have repeatedly documented the harmful health effects of synthetic fragrance exposure. These are not fringe concerns. These are well-established medical realities.

Fragrance-free policies are already in place in hospitals, clinics, schools, and workplaces across the country. They reduce medical emergencies, increase productivity, and improve overall public health outcomes. They are practical, achievable, and effective.

But more than that, this bill sends a message.

It tells people with disabilities that their health matters. That their participation matters. That their presence in public spaces matters.

Government buildings belong to all of us. They should not be places where disabled people are placed in danger simply by walking through the door.

House Bill 1544 is not about comfort. It is about survival, equity, and civil rights.

ABLE NH urges this committee to stand on the side of accessibility, health, and inclusion. We respectfully ask for an Ought to Pass recommendation on House Bill 1544.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this critical legislation.

Respectfully submitted,



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