

**NEW HAMPSHIRE PROBATION & PAROLE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
AND THE NH PROBATION & PAROLE COMMAND STAFF ASSOCIATION**

Presented by Frank Swirko, President
New Hampshire Probation and Parole Officers Association

In Opposition to HB 1704 (As Introduced) - AN ACT permitting public employees to bargain individually with public employers without any intervention.

House Labor, Industrial & Rehabilitative Services Committee
January 27, 2026

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Labor, Industrial & Rehabilitative Services Committee

My name is Frank Swirko, and I serve as President of the New Hampshire Probation and Parole Officers Association. I am here today on behalf of both the NH Probation & Parole Officers Association and the NH Probation & Parole Command Staff Association.

The New Hampshire Probation and Parole Officers Association (NHPPOA) and the NH Probation & Parole Command Staff Association are two separate labor unions representing different bargaining units within the New Hampshire Department of Corrections. Each union negotiates its own collective-bargaining agreement separately with the State of New Hampshire under RSA 273-A.

The NHPPOA represents probation and parole officers and supervisors, while the Command Staff Association represents command-level probation and parole employees. Although the unions bargain separately, they are presenting this testimony jointly due to shared operational and public-safety concerns raised by the legislation under consideration.

While individual probation and parole officers are responsible for investigating, supervising, monitoring, and aiding in the rehabilitation of justice-involved individuals in the community, the unions provide the organizational structure and institutional support that allow officers, supervisors, and command staff to perform these duties safely, consistently, and effectively.

We are opposed to HB 1704.

Probation and parole is a statewide public-safety function that depends on uniform standards, clear authority, and consistent supervision practices. Officers and supervisors enforce court orders, manage risk, respond to violations, and coordinate daily with law enforcement and

the courts. This work requires predictability and clarity in employment standards and operational expectations.

HB 1704 would weaken the established collective-bargaining framework by encouraging individualized negotiations over terms and conditions of employment. In a public-safety environment, this approach introduces unnecessary risk. It opens the door to inconsistent rules, fragmented practices, and uncertainty in supervisory authority, all of which undermine effective operations and accountability.

From a command-staff perspective, the bill would increase administrative burden and divert leadership attention away from supervision, staffing, training, and safety priorities. From a line-officer perspective, it undermines fairness and consistency in working conditions that officers rely on when performing difficult and sometimes dangerous work.

The collective-bargaining framework under RSA 273-A has long provided a predictable and workable structure for resolving workplace issues while keeping disputes out of day-to-day operations. That stability is especially critical in probation and parole, where uncertainty can have direct public-safety consequences.

HB 1704 would replace that stability with uncertainty, increased disputes, and operational inconsistency, without any demonstrated benefit to public safety or efficiency.

For these reasons, the NH Probation & Parole Officers Association and the NH Probation & Parole Command Staff Association respectfully urge the Committee to recommend HB 1704 as Inexpedient to Legislate.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Francis M. Swirko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Francis Swirko, President
New Hampshire Probation
and Parole Officers
Association