

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1124

An Act Relative to the Right to Compute New Hampshire House of Representatives

Chairman Hunt, Vice Chair Potucek, Clerk Post, and Members of the House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1124, An Act Relative to the Right to Compute. My name is Bryce Chinault, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Abundance Institute, a non-profit, non-partisan public policy organization focused on ensuring that emerging technologies—particularly advanced computing and artificial intelligence—are able to reach their full potential and increase innovation, opportunity, and broad-based prosperity.

HB 1124 affirms a simple but foundational principle: *the freedom to access and use computational tools is a natural extension of liberties New Hampshire citizens already possess*. Just as the state does not control who may think, write, calculate, or invent, it should not seize authority to limit lawful access to general-purpose computing based on the scale, intensity, or novelty of its use.¹ The role of the state is not to impede rights but rather to secure them. New Hampshire has long stood for individual liberty, decentralized innovation, and skepticism of unnecessary government control. HB 1124 fits squarely within that tradition.

AI is a general-purpose technology—like printing presses, engines, or electricity—which underpins education, healthcare, manufacturing, scientific research, and modern commerce. As this technology become more capable, the risk is not that these tools will be *too powerful*, but that access to them will quietly become *permissioned*—limited not by lawfulness or harm, but by arbitrary thresholds, licensing schemes, or administrative discretion—and concentrated—available only to a handful of individuals and entities.

HB 1124 draws a clear line: *lawful computation is not a privilege to be granted by the state, but a freedom to be protected by it*.

New Hampshire is not acting alone in asserting and protecting the Right to Compute. Legislators across the country—spanning regions and political coalitions—are recognizing the need to establish clear guardrails that protect innovation before restrictions calcify.

A few examples make this point clear:

- **Montana’s SB 212**, the first Right to Compute law enacted in the nation, passed unanimously in the Senate and was signed into law this year. It has since become a model for how states can protect computational liberty while preserving the ability to regulate actual harms.²
- **Ohio’s HB 392** has received multiple hearings and broad support, with strong engagement from policymakers concerned about long-term economic competitiveness.³
- **New Hampshire** itself has already engaged this principle through CACR 6, demonstrating that this legislature is thinking seriously and proactively about these issues.
- Additional Right to Compute bills have been introduced in states like **South Carolina**, and the framework has received broad support within national policy organizations as well.⁴

1 Safeguarding Computational Liberty in America: <https://jamesmadison.org/safeguarding-computational-liberty-in-america/>

2 Montana SB 212 (2025): <https://bills.legmt.gov/#/laws/bill/2/LC0292>

3 Ohio HB 392 (2025/26): <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/136/hb392>

4 South Carolina H 4657 (2026): <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/billsearch.php?billnumbers=4657>

HB 1124 places New Hampshire at the forefront of this national conversation—avoiding the temptation to regulate out of fear and instead empower its residents to thrive in the Age of Advanced Computing. That said, this right, like all rights, has limits. It is important to be clear about the scope of this bill.

HB 1124 does not:

- deregulate harmful or unlawful conduct;
- prevent the state from enforcing consumer protection, safety, privacy, or criminal laws; nor
- exempt computing activities from generally applicable regulations.

Instead, it does:

- prevents bans on lawful computing based solely on scale, energy use, or computational intensity;
- establishes a clear presumption that access to general-purpose computing is protected; and,
- requires the state to justify restrictions based on demonstrable harm, not speculative risk.

This approach is both prudent and familiar. New Hampshire already applies similar reasoning in areas ranging from speech to commerce to property rights. HB 1124 simply extends that reasoning into the digital age. States that treat computing as an asset will attract talent, investment, and experimentation. States that treat computation as something to be rationed will not. *Advanced manufacturing, AI research, biomedical innovation, energy optimization, and next-generation education tools all rely on access to affordable, scalable computing.* HB 1124 sends a clear signal to entrepreneurs, researchers, and employers: New Hampshire is open to builders.

Importantly, this is not about favoring large companies over individuals. In practice, restrictions on computation often hurt *small firms, startups, students, and researchers* first—those least able to navigate complex permitting regimes or absorb compliance costs. Protecting the right to compute is a pro-competition, pro-opportunity policy.

HB 1124 is a modest bill with profound implications. It does not attempt to predict the future of technology, but it wisely anchors policy in enduring principles: liberty, neutrality, and restraint. New Hampshire has an opportunity to lead—not by over-regulating what it cannot yet fully foresee, but by affirming that innovation flourishes best where freedom is the default and regulation is grounded in evidence of real harm.

One possible enhancement of this bill could be the addition of a dedicated section that clearly outlines the procedural steps for citizens and businesses seeking to dispute potential violations. This would involve detailing the avenues available; from initial informal discussions with regulatory bodies to more formal appeal processes. It could also clarify the evidence and documentation required at each stage. Such an inclusion would empower regulated parties with a clear understanding of their rights and the dispute mechanism. My colleagues and I would be happy to work with the sponsors on how such a section could be written.

On behalf of the Abundance Institute, I respectfully urge the committee to **support HB 1124**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryce Chinault

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