



February 3, 2026

Honorable Chairman Spillane
NH Fish and Game and Marine Resources Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1140

Dear Honorable Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1140. For the record, my name is Krysten Evans, and I serve as the Director of Policy for ABLE NH, a statewide disability justice organization led by and for people with disabilities. Our mission is rooted in civil rights, dignity, access, and full participation in community life.

We support this bill but recommend replacing the phrase "suffering from" with person-centered language, as disability itself is not a condition of suffering. (A person with paraplegia)

HB 1140 is about fairness, inclusion, and the simple yet powerful belief that people with disabilities deserve the same opportunities to participate fully in the traditions, recreation, and cultural life of our state.

New Hampshire has a deep hunting tradition. For many families, hunting is not just recreation, but heritage, food security, connection to land, and community belonging. For people with disabilities, however, structural barriers often turn these meaningful experiences into impossible ones.

Current law limits access to special motor-vehicle hunting permits to individuals with paraplegia or loss of both lower extremities. This narrow definition excludes countless individuals with disabilities whose physical conditions significantly limit mobility, endurance, or safe independent movement. People with neuromuscular disorders, degenerative joint disease, cardiac limitations, traumatic brain injuries, complex chronic illnesses, and other disabling conditions are left out, despite facing equally real functional barriers. HB 1140 corrects this inequity.

By expanding eligibility to individuals with any physical disability that substantially limits their ability to hunt without assistance, this bill recognizes a fundamental truth, disability is not one-size-fits-all. It acknowledges that access should be based on functional need, not rigid diagnostic categories. This is a core principle of disability justice and modern accessibility policy.

Importantly, this bill does not compromise safety or conservation. It maintains all licensing requirements, establishes clear permitting authority through Fish and Game, reinforces firearm safety rules, and includes safeguards to ensure responsible use. It balances access with stewardship, inclusion with accountability.

For many people with disabilities, access to outdoor recreation is directly tied to physical health, mental wellness, and quality of life. Outdoor activity reduces isolation, improves emotional health, supports physical rehabilitation, and fosters community belonging. These benefits are not luxuries. They are essential components of well-being. Access is also about dignity.

When people with disabilities are unnecessarily restricted from participating in activities that others take for granted, the message they receive is that their presence is an inconvenience, their needs are secondary, and their inclusion is optional. HB 1140 sends the opposite message, that people with disabilities belong, fully, visibly, and without apology.

At ABLE NH, our work is guided by people with lived experience of disability. Again and again, we hear how policies that seem minor to others carry enormous emotional weight. Access is never just logistical. It is deeply personal. It affirms identity, independence, and self-worth.

HB 1140 is thoughtful, balanced, and long overdue. It aligns New Hampshire with best practices in accessibility and reflects our shared values of independence, fairness, and respect.

On behalf of ABLE NH and the thousands of Granite Staters with disabilities we represent, I urge you to vote Ought to Pass on HB 1140.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to building a New Hampshire where everyone belongs.

Respectfully submitted,



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