



February 9, 2026

Honorable Chairman Vose
NH House Science, Technology and Energy Committee
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1685

Dear Honorable Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1685. For the record my name is Krysten Evans, and I serve as 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.

HB 1685 recognizes something New Hampshire has failed to fully acknowledge for far too long. Technology is not a luxury for people with disabilities. It is access. It is independence. It is dignity. And when systems are not built with a technology-first mindset, people with disabilities are the ones left behind.

This bill establishes a Technology-First Commission that centers the voices of people who actually use assistive technology. Not as an afterthought. Not as a checkbox. As leaders, experts, and decision-makers. That alone makes this bill different and necessary.

Right now, our systems are fragmented. Families are forced to navigate inconsistent standards, outdated models, and siloed agencies that do not talk to one another. People wait months or years for technology that already exists, technology that could allow them to communicate, work, learn, and live independently. HB 1685 creates the structure to fix that.

This commission is not about speculation. It is about analysis, data, and action. It brings together users of assistive technology, parents, state agencies, and organizations to evaluate what is working, what is broken, and what needs to change. It aligns training models. It examines real-world implementation. It makes recommendations grounded in lived experience and evidence, not assumptions.

A technology-first approach does not mean technology only. It means that when the state designs services, technology is considered from the beginning, not retrofitted later at higher cost and lower effectiveness. That approach is proven to improve outcomes and reduce long-term public spending by increasing

independence and decreasing unnecessary institutionalization.

HB 1685 is also responsible governance. It has a clear timeline, a defined scope, reporting requirements, and a sunset date. It ensures accountability while giving the commission the time it needs to do its work well.

Most importantly, this bill signals a cultural shift. It tells people with disabilities in New Hampshire that the state is ready to move forward, to modernize, and to listen. It tells families that innovation and access matter. It tells agencies that collaboration is no longer optional.

New Hampshire has an opportunity here to lead rather than lag. To build systems that reflect the reality of the 21st century and the people who live in it. HB 1685 is a smart, necessary step in that direction.

I urge you to vote this bill Ought to Pass.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krysten M. Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krysten M. Evans
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