



To: Chair Bob Lynn, Vice Chair Dennis Mannion, and the House Judiciary Committee

Re: Testimony in Opposition to HB 1313, repealing buffer zones for reproductive health care facilities

Date: February 11, 2026

Position: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE

The Equality Health Center is an independent, nonprofit reproductive and sexual health clinic in Concord, NH. For more than 50 years, we have provided essential, high-quality, evidence-based abortion care and other reproductive health services to our community.

In recent years, we have observed an increase in protest activity outside our facility. While we are generally familiar with regular protesters, concerns increase when unfamiliar individuals appear. On many occasions, a protester has been visibly armed and wearing a ballistic vest, which understandably heightens fear among patients and staff.

Safety is our highest priority — safety for our patients, staff, volunteer escorts, and the public. Over the years, our facility has been subjected to serious incidents, including threats, arson, vandalism, graffiti, and hazardous materials such as nails placed in our staff parking lot. In response, we have invested significant resources in security measures, including surveillance cameras, reinforced safety glass, and planned improvements to our building entrance.

Every person should be able to obtain and provide health care safely and without fear of harassment. Patient safety zones help ensure that patients and health care providers can enter facilities without facing threats, intimidation, or violence.

Our volunteer escorts play an essential role in maintaining a safe environment. They assist patients in entering the building and often help them return to their vehicles after appointments. In many ways, these volunteers already serve as a human buffer to help ensure patients can access lawful medical care.

Patient safety zones create a limited space around reproductive health care facilities that helps reduce the risk of harassment and confrontation, while still respecting the First Amendment rights of individuals to express their views. In New Hampshire, buffer zones are not mandatory; they are a discretionary tool that clinics may use when necessary to maintain safety.

We firmly believe in the importance of free speech. However, free speech should not extend to blocking, obstructing, and harassing individuals who are attempting to enter a medical facility to receive legal health care.

Because risks to abortion providers and patients remain real, we continue to devote substantial resources to security and maintain close collaboration with the National Abortion Federation. National data underscores the seriousness of these concerns: the National Abortion Federation's 2024 Violence and Disruption Report documented hundreds of incidents of threats and other acts of harm directed at abortion providers and patients in recent years. These realities reinforce why safety measures such as buffer zones remain critical to the safety of all.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to stand with patients, providers, and public safety by opposing HB 1313 and preserving this important protection.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jinelle Hall, Executive Director