



**Testimony to the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
February 24, 2026**

IN SUPPORT OF HB 1593

PROTECTING THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Offered by

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TO:

Representative Bob Lyon, Chair
Representative Dennis Mannion, Vice Chair
Members of the New Hampshire House
Judiciary Committee

Chair Lynn, Vice Chair Mannion, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of Epilepsy Foundation New England (EFNE), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of **HB 1593, *Protecting the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities***.

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological conditions in the country. Approximately **1 in 26 people** will develop epilepsy in their lifetime, and nearly 3.4 million Americans — including **1,500 children and teens in New Hampshire** — are currently living with active epilepsy.

We support HB 1593 because it codifies Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 into New Hampshire law, ensuring that people with disabilities are protected from discrimination in programs and services that receive state or federal funding.

Section 504 is a foundational civil rights protection. For individuals living with disabilities, including epilepsy, this protection is essential. It ensures equal access to education, health care, employment, and public services. Without this clear statutory backing, people with disabilities can face barriers that undermine their participation in daily life.

The need for this legislation is heightened by growing uncertainty at the federal level. Recent federal court challenges have created uncertainty and concern about the future of longstanding disability protections under Section 504. Codifying these protections in state law would ensure that New Hampshire residents do not lose critical rights due to shifts in federal policy or judicial interpretation.

HB 1593 would guarantee that all residents with disabilities, including those living with epilepsy, retain enforceable protections against discrimination. It sends a clear message that New Hampshire values the civil rights and dignity of its residents with disabilities and will provide stable, reliable protections regardless of federal changes.

We respectfully urge you to report **HB 1593, *Protecting the Civil Rights of People with Disabilities favorably from Committee.***

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me at kgordon@epilepsynewengland.org with any questions or for further information.