

This guide to testifying before the New Hampshire Legislature is brought to you by the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities. The Council is dedicated to dignity, full rights of citizenship, cultural diversity, equal opportunities, and full participation for all New Hampshire citizens with developmental disabilities.



About the Council

The Council is charged by Federal law to identify the most pressing needs of people with developmental disabilities in NH and to develop innovative ways to meet those needs through a five year state plan. The Council works to decrease barriers to a full community life of inclusion and advocates for policies that have a positive impact on the lived experiences of people with developmental disabilities.



NH Council on Developmental Disabilities
2 1/2 Beacon Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301
Phone: 603-271-3236
Fax: 603-271-1156
Ronnieann.Rakoski@ddc.nh.gov
www.nhcdd.org



Tips for Testifying

Speaking at hearings gives you the opportunity to tell legislators and decision makers how policy can and does impact your lived experiences. You have a right to testify and speak out about what is important to you.



NEW HAMPSHIRE COUNCIL ON
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

General Pointers

- Speak clearly, slowly, and loudly enough for all of the committee members to hear you.
- Remain calm and do not let your emotions take over.
- Dress in neat and clean clothing.
- Prepare written testimony to be submitted with your oral testimony. Use letterhead, if possible.
- Try not to read your written testimony word for word at the hearing; use it as a guide only.
- When addressing members of the committee, address them using “Representative” or “Senator” and then their last name (which are visible on the name plates in front of them).
- Speak only for 2 to 3 minutes.
- Only speak when it is your turn to testify or when a committee member directly asks you a question.
- If, by the time it’s your turn to testify, others have already made the points that you had planned to make, simply summarize those points very briefly and say that you agree with them.

Guide to Testimony

1. Greet the chair of the committee and the committee members.
2. Say your full name.
3. If you are testifying on behalf of a group or organization, name it. Briefly describe your group or organization.
4. Say what town or city you are from.
5. State whether you are testifying in support of or in opposition to the bill.
6. If applicable, say what your profession is and how long you have worked at it.
7. Briefly, tell the committee in one or two sentences what topic you will be testifying about.
8. Give the committee the focus of your testimony.
9. Tell the committee you will try to answer their questions if they have any.
10. Answer their questions. If you do not know the answer to a question, tell the committee that you will get back to them with an answer.
11. Thank the committee.



Example of Testimony

Good morning Madam Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Roberta Gallant. I am a member of the NH Council on Developmental Disabilities. I am here today to testify on behalf of the Council Policy Committee in support of HB 531. I will be testifying today about how this bill will make it easier for people with disabilities to vote. Allowing caregivers to deliver absentee ballots for those who can not deliver them themselves will give people a better chance to have their vote counted. We support this change. Thank you for your time and attention to this important bill. I would be happy to try to answer any questions the committee may have.