

We have an important update: after 9 days of testimony from 22 witnesses, the **HB 1569 trial has concluded** and we now await a decision expected before the September primary. The case represents a pivotal moment in efforts to challenge barriers created by the law and safeguard voter access across New Hampshire.

Open Democracy, alongside the League of Women Voters NH, ACLU-NH, and the NH Youth Movement, is bringing this legal challenge. **In case you missed it, here are some links to press coverage of the trial:**

- [Trial begins over fate of NH's proof-of-citizenship voter law](#)
- [Trial challenging NH's proof of citizenship to vote law begins](#)
- [Plaintiffs argue NH voter citizenship law an unlawful burden, in first day of two-week trial](#)



This week in NH Election Law...

- With school vacation week bringing a pause in committee hearings, we're using this time to focus on strategic action around two priority bills:
 - **OPPOSE HB 323:** bans student IDs for voting. ❌
 - **SUPPORT HB 1277:** improves absentee voting accessibility. ✅
- Town Meeting Day is also approaching quickly on March 10, and we're sharing ways to get out the vote *and* protect it—including opportunities

to join our [upcoming poll observer trainings](#). 🧑

The following actions, along with additional resources, can also be found on our website [HERE](#). We also host **volunteer meetings twice a week** (our ODA Teams!) where we discuss these efforts, share updates, and strategize together in real time. Feel free to drop in when you can or come every week—sign up [HERE](#) to join the team and receive the Zoom link!

Want to stay better connected with ODA? [Join our Slack workspace](#). This will be an especially helpful tool for fast communication throughout the legislative session.

1. Stand with Students: Urge Your State Senator to Oppose HB 323 🎓

On Tuesday, February 17, the Senate Election Law Committee voted 3-1 to recommend [HB 323](#) as Ought to Pass (OTP) to the full Senate. This bill bans student IDs for voting.

The committee did acknowledge receiving a high volume of constituent emails —**thank you to everyone who reached out and made their opposition clear**. Although the committee vote was disappointing, your engagement remains critical as the bill heads to the full Senate.

If passed, HB 323 would disproportionately impact young voters and risk discouraging student participation in elections at a time when increasing civic engagement should be supported.

The full Senate is expected to vote on the bill Thursday, March 5. [Here are ways you can take action ahead of the vote:](#)

→ [Email your Senator.](#) 

→ [Call your Senator.](#) 

→ Amplify our message on social media by sharing our action post on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), or [Bluesky](#). 

→ **Interested in doing more?** Reply to this email if you'd like to help phonebank and call fellow supporters, encouraging them to contact their senators as well. 

2. More Accessible Absentee Voting: Urge the House Election Law Committee to Support HB 1277

[HB 1277](#) would allow absentee voters to provide their driver's license or nondriver identification number on their absentee ballot application instead of submitting a copy of their ID, getting the application notarized, or presenting ID in person.

This proposal responds to changes made under [SB 287](#), passed last year, which created new requirements for absentee applicants to either submit a photocopy of identification, obtain notarization, or go in person to their clerk's office for ID verification. [As many voters predicted when sharing their stories](#)—collected before SB 287 took effect this past September—these requirements have created significant and unnecessary barriers to absentee voting.

HB 1277 offers a common-sense improvement by reducing these hurdles while maintaining secure identity verification through ID numbers already issued by the state. While not a complete solution, the bill would meaningfully improve absentee voting accessibility under current law.

On Tuesday, February 17, the House Election Law Committee **recessed** HB 1277, meaning the committee will revisit the bill and is likely to vote on whether to recommend it as **Inexpedient to Legislate (ITL)** or **Ought to Pass (OTP)** to the full House on **Tuesday, March 3**.

Here are ways you can take action ahead of the vote:

➡ **Email the Committee.** 

➡ **Know someone affected by absentee ballot barriers?** The [NH Campaign for Voting Rights \(NHCVR\)](#) is building a story bank for possible Senate testimony should HB 1277 advance past its executive session and pass the House, with a **focus on voices from people with disabilities and Age Strong voters in nursing homes or retirement communities.**

- Click here to view last year's [SB 287 storybook](#) as a reference.
- To submit a story, [email Sarah Chouinard](#), Voting Rights Program Manager at NHCVR.

3. Get Ready for March Town Elections: GOTV & Poll Observing

With most town elections taking place March 10, now is the time to prepare —both to help boost turnout and to protect the voting process.

After NHCVR's Poll Observer Program documented at least [244 voters impacted by restrictive voting laws in 2025](#), we're getting ready to do it again for town elections. **Join one of our upcoming poll observer trainings to help monitor the voting process and ensure eligible voters can cast a ballot without unnecessary barriers:**

- ➡ [RSVP: February 24 at 7:00 PM](#)
- ➡ [RSVP: March 4 at 6:00 PM](#)
- If you've been a poll observer with the NHCVR before, you can [click here to sign up and share your availability.](#)

Make sure your friends and family are registered to vote. **Local elections are where voters have the most direct power to shape decisions affecting their communities.** Your participation helps ensure these important community decisions reflect the voices of all voters.

Reminders for Registering to Vote

Registrants missing required documentation can no longer sign an affidavit swearing to their eligibility (HB 1569). To register to vote in New Hampshire, you **must** provide documentary proof of your age, citizenship, identity, and domicile.

- Identity & Age: driver's license, government/school issued photo ID, passport
- Citizenship*: birth certificate, passport, or naturalization papers
 - AND marriage certificate/name change documents if applicable
- Domicile: photo ID with NH address, vehicle registration, government issued check, benefit statement, or state/federal tax document
 - If you do not have one of the listed documents to prove domicile, you may provide a lease/rental agreement, utility bill, property tax bill, or other reasonable documentation and be required to sign an attestation form.

***HB 464 (effective Sept. 2025):** Proof of citizenship or age is **not** required if you were previously registered in NH or are currently registered in another NH town/ward. If you need a copy of your birth, marriage, or divorce record only for the purpose of registering to vote, [you can request a free certified copy from the NH Division of Vital Records.](#)

Reminders for Voting

 Double check your registration status and absentee ballot request/return status, and have documentation available just in case! 

 Be sure to bring a [valid photo-ID to receive your ballot:](#)

- Driver's license issued by any state or federal government;
- Non-driver ID card issued by NH DMV or motor vehicle agency of another state;
- [Free Photo ID card for "voting identification only"](#) issued by NH DMV (RSA 260:21);
- United States armed services identification card;
- United States passport or passcard;
- NH student ID card;
- Verification of the voter's identity by a moderator or other election official of a town, ward or city (not a ballot clerk).

 **Forward this email** to someone you want to encourage to participate in their Town Election.

 [Share/save this document](#) with recent election law changes in NH to be sure you're up to date on the latest voting requirements.

Thank you for staying engaged and energized week after week. **Taking just one intentional action can make a world of difference.** 🌍

We'll continue tracking hearings, votes, and advocacy opportunities closely and will be back in your inbox next Friday with clear ways to weigh in as bills advance. Together, we can push back against harmful legislation and advance real solutions that protect and strengthen democracy in New Hampshire. We're grateful to be in this work with you.

<https://www.opendemocracynh.org/>

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