



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT of NATURAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION  
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January 18, 2023

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo  
and the Resources, Recreation and Development Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Rm 305  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**RE: HB 141 relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks**

Dear Chair Renzullo and the Members of the Committee,


Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources ("Department"), Division of Parks and Recreation ("Division") regarding HB 141 relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks. **The Division appreciates the concerns of the bill's sponsor but we respectfully provide the Committee with the following information. The Division already allows dogs off leash and under the control of their handler under current administrative rules.**

Pursuant to Department administrative rule Res 7301.08, and except for state park areas where dogs are prohibited year round, "in remote areas dogs shall be permitted off leash and under the control of their handlers in accordance with RSA 466:30-a provided that the dog is not or does not become a menace, a nuisance or vicious as defined in RSA 466:31, under which the owner or handler shall restrain, leash and remove the dog from the property. For purposes of this section, remote area means those areas and trails where and during a time when the dog owner or handler and the dog will not come in contact with other users. The dog owner or handler shall leash the dog when other users are present."

Our ability to tailor our administrative rules on animals in state parks allows for changes over time based on community trends and other factors such as development and improvements to parks, visitation levels, and other natural resource management considerations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill. **We hope that the existing administrative rules that allows dogs to be off leash and under the control of their handler addresses the concerns of the bill's sponsor and therefore, HB 141 is not necessary.**

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Wilson  
Director

C: Sarah L. Stewart, Commissioner, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

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