

CONSENT CALENDAR

March 8, 2023

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The Committee on Resources, Recreation and Development to which was referred HB 141,

AN ACT relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.

Having considered the same, report the same with the following resolution: **RESOLVED**, that it is

INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

Rep. Suzanne Vail

FOR THE COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee:	Resources, Recreation and Development
Bill Number:	HB 141
Title:	relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.
Date:	March 8, 2023
Consent Calendar:	CONSENT
Recommendation:	INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This bill would allow dogs off-leash in state parks, on hiking trails where motor vehicles are prohibited, if the dogs are under the physical and verbal control of their owner. The committee heard testimony that the Division of Parks and Recreations already allows dogs off-leash and under the control of their handler under certain administrative rules. The ability of the Division to tailor administrative rules based on the park's visitors, features, needs for development, and natural resource management is critical to the consideration of all aspects of managing NH's state parks. The committee found the present rules appropriate.

Vote 20-0.

Rep. Suzanne Vail
FOR THE COMMITTEE

Original: House Clerk
Cc: Committee Bill File

CONSENT CALENDAR

Resources, Recreation and Development

HB 141, relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks. **INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.**

Rep. Suzanne Vail for Resources, Recreation and Development. This bill would allow dogs off-leash in state parks, on hiking trails where motor vehicles are prohibited, if the dogs are under the physical and verbal control of their owner. The committee heard testimony that the Division of Parks and Recreations already allows dogs off-leash and under the control of their handler under certain administrative rules. The ability of the division to tailor administrative rules based on the park's visitors, features, needs for development, and natural resource management is critical to the consideration of all aspects of managing NH's state parks. The committee found the present rules appropriate. **Vote 20-0.**

Original: House Clerk

Cc: Committee Bill File

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SESSION on HB 141

BILL TITLE: relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.

DATE: March 8, 2023

LOB ROOM: 305-307

MOTIONS: INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE

Moved by Rep. Vail

Seconded by Rep. E. Kelley

Vote: 20-0

CONSENT CALENDAR: YES

Statement of Intent: Refer to Committee Report

Respectfully submitted,

Rep Juliet Harvey-Bolia, Clerk



2023 SESSION

Resources, Recreation and Development

Bill #: 141 Motion: ITL AM #: _____ Exec Session Date: 3/8/23

Members	YEAS	Nays	NV
Renzullo, Andrew Chairman <i>Sec</i>	✓		
Harb, Robert D. Vice Chairman	✓		
Gould, Linda R.	✓		
Horgan, James F.	✓		
Harvey-Bolia, Juliet Clerk	✓		
Healey, Robert V.	✓		
Wolf, Dan H.	✓		
McGough, Tim S	✓		
Donnelly, Tanya	✓		
Dunn, Ron	✓		
Vail, Suzanne M.	✓		
Rung, Rosemarie	✓		
Kelley, Eamon P.	✓		
Simpson, Alexis H	✓		
Baldwin, Heather P	✓		
Darby, Will	✓		
Hoyt, Tommy	✓		
LaMontagne, Jessica F	✓		
Lovett, Peter	✓		
Ryan, Linda V	✓		
TOTAL VOTE:	20	0	

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES, RECREATION AND DEVELOPMENT

PUBLIC HEARING ON HB 141

BILL TITLE: relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.

DATE: January 18, 2023

LOB ROOM: 305 - 307 **Time Public Hearing Called to Order:** 10:45 a.m.

Time Adjourned:

Committee Members: Reps. Renzullo, Harb, J. Harvey-Bolia, L. Gould, Horgan, Healey, Wolf, McGough, Donnelly, Dunn, Vail, Rung, E. Kelley, Simpson, Baldwin, Darby, Hoyt, LaMontagne, Lovett and Ryan

Bill Sponsors:
Rep. Harrington

TESTIMONY

* Use asterisk if written testimony and/or amendments are submitted.

Rep. Mike Harrington - Prime sponsor of the bill. Introduced his bill and spoke in favor of his bill, which seeks to allow dogs on hiking trails in State Parks to be allowed off-leash. Some crowded parks do not allow dogs at all. Leash laws are unenforceable in state parks. The White Mountain National Forest does not require leashes. This proposal is consistent with National Forest rules which allow dogs to be off-leash but requiring the owner to carry and use the leash when needed.

***Brian Wilson, Director, DNCR** - Stated that dogs are already allowed off-leash and the bill is unnecessary.

***Paul Nickerson, NH Audubon Society** - Opposes the bill due to harm the dog may cause to wildlife.

Respectfully submitted,

Rep. Juliet Harvey-Bolia
Clerk

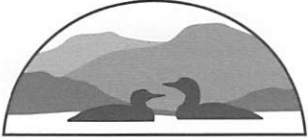
House Remote Testify

Resources, Recreation and Development Committee Testify List for Bill HB141 on 20

Support: 0 Oppose: 6 Neutral: 0 Total to Testify: 0

[Export to Excel](#)

<u>Name</u>	<u>City, State</u> <u>Email Address</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Testifying</u>	<u>Non-Germane</u>	<u>?</u>
Blais, Vanessa	Manchester, NH Bessblais@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	?
Holstein, Susanne	Bedford, NH srholstein@comcast.net	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	?
Anastasia, Patricia	Londonderry, NH patti.anastasia@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	?
Richardson, Diane	springfield, NH workingclasscanine@msn.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	?
Donnelly, Ryan	Hudson, NH rdonnelly@gsil.org	A Member of the Public	Granite State Independent Living	Oppose	No	No	?
Smith, Suzanne	Hebron, NH zanne719@gmail.com	A Member of the Public	Myself	Oppose	No	No	?



NH AUDUBON
Protecting our environment since 1914

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Concord, NH 03301
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Fax 603-226-0902
nha@nhaudubon.org
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REGIONAL CENTERS

MASSABESIC CENTER
26 Audubon Way
Auburn, NH 03032
Phone 603-668-2045

McLANE CENTER
84 Silk Farm Road
Concord, NH 03301
Phone 603-224-9909

NEWFOUND CENTER
Summer Mailing Address:
50 North Shore Road
Hebron, NH 03241
Location:
290 North Shore Road
Hebron, NH 03241
Phone 603-744-3516

January 18, 2023

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo
House Resources, Recreation, and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

Re: Opposition to HB141 allowing dogs off leash on certain trails in state parks

Dear Chair Renzullo and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB141 on behalf of NH Audubon. We are a statewide conservation organization dedicated to protecting New Hampshire's environment for wildlife and for people.

We are strongly opposed to HB141, which would allow unleashed dogs under verbal control on hiking trails in New Hampshire state parks. Dog owners are unlikely to restrict their animals to a trail proper and may allow them to explore both sides of a trail while within verbal control. Such exploration presents risks to native wildlife, especially during the nesting season. Ground-nesting birds, including game species such as Ruffed Grouse, American Woodcock, and Wild Turkey, and non-game species such as Hermit Thrush and Ovenbird are vulnerable to nest failure triggered by curious dogs. Dogs are also known to capture young birds not yet able to fly well.

The stated mission of New Hampshire's Division of Parks and Recreation is "to provide New Hampshire's citizens and guests with outstanding recreational, educational, and inspirational experiences *through the responsible management and cooperative stewardship of the state's natural, recreational, and cultural resources*" [emphasis added]. Allowing unleashed dogs in state parks does not constitute responsible management of the state's natural resources.

We urge you vote HB141 INEXPEDIENT TO LEGISLATE.

Sincerely,

Carol R. Foss
Senior Advisor for Science and Policy

HB 141 - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0676

04/08

HOUSE BILL **141**

AN ACT relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.

SPONSORS: Rep. Harrington, Straf. 18

COMMITTEE: Resources, Recreation and Development

ANALYSIS

This bill allows dogs off leash on certain hiking trails in state parks.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three

AN ACT relative to dogs on hiking trails in state parks.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Section; State Park System; Dogs. Amend RSA 216-A by inserting after section 3-o the
2 following new section:

3 216-A:3-p Dogs in State Parks. On hiking trails where motor vehicles are prohibited, dogs may
4 be off leash if such dogs are under the verbal or physical control of their owner or handler. The
5 owner or handler of such dog shall carry a leash in order to physically restrain and control the dog if
6 necessary. Leashes shall be used on hiking trails when such trail crosses into picnic or camping
7 areas, parking lots, or the area near or surrounding a restroom. The department may require all
8 dogs to be leashed on certain trails which the department has designated as having unique
9 conditions such high pedestrian traffic, and the department shall post such trails with signage
10 indicating that all dogs must be leashed.

11 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.