



# NEW HAMPSHIRE SENATE

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
April 5, 2024

---

### Senate Passes Bill to Protect Granite State Children

**CONCORD, NH** –Senate Majority Leader Sharon Carson (R-Londonderry) issued the following statement today on the Senate passing two of her bills that strengthen protections for New Hampshire children, SB 459-FN and SB 463-FN:

“Children deserve to have their voices heard and respected, especially in matters that have significantly impacted their lives. These bills expand access to court-appointed counsel for children in dependency proceedings and address the presumption of harm under the Child Protection Act. We must continue working on helping our youth so that they get the representation they need in court and limit child abuse and neglect in our state. Both bills work to protect children and give them a stronger voice so that they can advocate for what is in their best interest. Children are the most vulnerable of our population, and they depend on us to take action to protect them.”

**Background:** SB 463-FN requires the court to appoint an attorney to represent the expressed interests of a child who is placed in a group home or childcare institution.

SB 459-FN adds the use of restraint or seclusion to the definition of institutional child abuse or neglect in the Child Protection Act, updates the rebuttable presumption of harm, and updates the mandatory reporting law to protect youth.

Majority Leader Sharon Carson is the prime sponsor for both bills.

###

**Media Contact:**

Peter O’Neill, Communications Director  
[peter.oneill@leg.state.nh.us](mailto:peter.oneill@leg.state.nh.us)  
603-271-3043