

RELEASE: LAWSUIT REQUESTS ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABLED HOUSE MEMBERS AT HEIGHTENED RISK OF COVID-19

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Complaint with Exhibits.pdf; Motion for Prelim Inj w Memo and Exhibits.pdf;



New Hampshire House of Representatives Concord, New Hampshire House Democratic Office

PRESS RELEASE

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LAWSUIT REQUESTS ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABLED HOUSE MEMBERS AT HEIGHTENED RISK OF COVID-19

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE – Last night, **House Democratic Leader Renny Cushing (D-Hampton)** and seven other House members filed suit in U.S. District Court seeking declaratory and injunctive relief. The suit requests that Speaker Packard provide remote access to House sessions to legislators with medical conditions that make them especially vulnerable to Covid-19. **House Democratic Leader Renny Cushing (D-Hampton)** released the following statement:

“Last night, joined by seven other members of the New Hampshire House of Representatives, I filed suit in Federal Court seeking declaratory and injunctive relief against the Speaker of the House in his official capacity. The New Hampshire House consists of 400 members with an average age over 60 and, since the onset of the pandemic last spring, House Democrats have been working to allow safe, remote participation at House sessions.

This past November, responding to an inquiry by the House, the New Hampshire Supreme Court ruled that remote participation is permissible under the New Hampshire Constitution. However, the new House Republican Majority has repeatedly refused to allow any members that option; even denying those with disabilities which put them at severe risk from Covid-19.

With community transmission of Covid-19 still high in New Hampshire, and the discovery of new, more contagious strains of the virus, there is no legitimate or justifiable reason to deny at-risk legislators the right to safely serve their constituents. This lawsuit seeks relief for the members who requested remote access to House sessions under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

As my leadership team and I have done from the start, we will continue to offer solutions to the Speaker and work with him on an acceptable resolution. However, with only eight days until the next House Session and no indication that the Speaker will provide remote access, we had no choice but to

resort to litigation.”

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He/Him/His

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