



SENATE BILL 648: Winter Sports Safety and Accidents.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Judiciary 2. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 28, 2026
Introduced by:	Sens. B. Newton, Britt, Daniel	Prepared by:	Debbie Griffiths Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	PCS to Third Edition S648-CSCI-46		

OVERVIEW: *The PCS to Senate Bill 648 would amend Chapter 99C of the General Statutes (Actions Related to Winter Sports Safety and Accidents) by:*

- *Amending the duties and responsibilities of skiers and ski area operators.*
- *Permitting assumption of risk as an affirmative defense.*
- *Limiting liability and damages for plaintiffs' injuries.*
- *Establishing a one-year statute of limitations for recovery of damages arising under this Chapter.*
- *Creating a Class 1 misdemeanor and civil action for misuse of a ski pass.*
- *Providing limited immunity for a ski area operator's employee or agent related to an individual's detention or arrest for misuse of a ski pass.*
- *Permitting enforceability of waivers of liability.*
- *Exempting bona fide volunteers at a ski area, including youth under the age of 18 years old, from state minimum wage, overtime, youth employment, and record keeping requirements.*

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS would amend Chapter 99C of the General Statutes as follows:

- A ski area operator's duties and responsibilities would be amended to include posting signs giving reasonable notice of slope or trail conditions at or near the top of or at the entrance of slope or trail, at ticket kiosks, or online and to not engage willfully or with gross negligence in any type of conduct which causes injury to a person or their property.
- A skier's duties and responsibilities would be amended to include not skiing off or outside of boundaries, not skiing on a slope that is closed or outside of operational hours, to heed all information and warnings and refrain from acting in a way that may cause injury to others, to remain onsite when the skier collides with another individual unless it is necessary to leave to obtain help. When a crash occurs, the skier must also provide their name and current address to the ski patrol or ski area employee.
- Noneconomic damages entered against all defendants would be limited to no more than \$250,000, present value of lost wages would be limited to no more than \$250,000, and total damages which could be recovered against a ski area operator by a skier could not exceed \$1,000,000 present value for past or future damages.

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Senate 648 PCS

Page 2

- Assumption of the risk of the inherent dangers of skiing would be an affirmative defense.
- The statute of limitations to bring an action against a ski operator or its employees would be one-year.
- A Class 1 misdemeanor for misuse of ski passes would be created. A person would be guilty of misuse of ski passes if that person does any of the prohibited activities. A Class 1 misdemeanor is punishable by an absolute minimum of 1 day of community punishment to an absolute maximum of 120 days of active punishment, depending on the defendant's prior record level.
- A civil action would be created for a civil action against a skier who misuses a ski pass.
- A ski area operator's employee or agent would have limited immunity related to an individual's detention or arrest for misuse of the ski pass.
- Waivers of liability executed in conjunction with winter sports would be enforceable.
- Bona fide volunteers at a ski would be exempt from G.S. 95-25.3 (minimum wage), 95-25.4 (overtime), 95-25.5 (youth employment), and 95-25.15(b) recordkeeping.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would become effective on October 1, 2026, and apply to causes of action arising or after that date and offenses committed on or after that date.