



February 5, 2020

Honorable Chairman Edward Butler
House Commerce and Consumer Affairs
36 North State Street Room 302
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Dear Chairman Butler and Committee Members,

My name is Kenneth Norton, I am the Executive Director of NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and I have family members who have serious mental illness as well as co-occurring addiction. On behalf of NAMI NH, I am here to testify in support of HB 1464 about alternative treatments.

There is considerable research demonstrating the link between depression and chronic pain. It is NAMI NH's long-standing position that there should be "no wrong door" to seeking help or treatment for any mental health or addictive disorder. Likewise, for pain and or physical conditions. There is a great need for alternative and/or complementary treatments beyond just the medical model of medications or office-based therapy and treatment. Therefore, we support the importance of providing health insurance coverage for the use of yoga and yoga therapy.

There is a considerable body of research showing the therapeutic benefits to yoga and yoga therapy. I am more familiar with the research on yoga and yoga therapies as it relates to mental illness particularly for conditions including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety and depression. Despite the research on the effectiveness of yoga, yoga therapy, and meditation, these alternative treatment modalities are often overlooked for treatment of pain, addiction or mental health conditions. One notable exception to this is the Veterans Administration which has promoted the use of yoga and meditation for physical as well as psychological injury and addictive disorders.

NAMI NH believes alternative therapies are an important path to wellness and recovery for many different conditions. Therefore, we are asking you to vote HB 1464 as ought to pass.

I am happy to answer any questions which you may have.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth Norton".

Kenneth Norton, LICSW
Executive Director

Find Help, Find Hope

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