



# NAMI New Hampshire

January 11, 2022

Honorable Chair Ruth Ward  
Senate Education Committee  
Legislate Office Building Room 101  
North Main St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for SB 234

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Holly Stevens, and I am the Director of Public Policy at NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI NH is a non-profit, non-partisan, grassroots organization whose mission is to improve the lives of all people impacted by mental illness and suicide through support, education and advocacy. On behalf of NAMI NH, I am here today to speak in favor of SB 234, requiring student identification cards to include the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Over the past decade, already high suicide rates have been rising in the United States and in New Hampshire. Attached to this testimony is a chart detailing the leading causes of death in the US. This chart is the product of the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It shows that the second leading cause of death for 10–24-year-old individuals is suicide. This is the exact age range that this legislation is targeting.

Additionally, according to Health Affairs, between 2007 and 2018, suicide increased 57.4 percent in 10–24-year-olds. In one survey of high school students, one in three youth reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness and one in five had seriously considered suicide.<sup>1</sup> More precisely, results from the 2019 Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System show that 18.8% of high school students seriously considered attempting suicide and 8.9% attempted suicide.

SB 234 offers a simple solution that has the potential to save lives. Suicide phone lines provide timely and constant access to a resource that provides support and comfort to those who are actively suicidal. Printing the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on the back of a student identification card is a great way to assure that this age group has access to this very important resource. For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee vote to recommend ought to pass for SB 234.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly A. Stevens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.

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<sup>1</sup> "Understanding Suicide Risk And Prevention," Health Affairs Health Policy Brief, January 29, 2021.

*Find Help, Find Hope.*

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## 10 Leading Causes of Death, United States 2019, All Races, Both Sexes

Rank	Age Groups										All Ages
	<1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
1	Congenital Anomalies 4,301	Unintentional Injury 1,149	Unintentional Injury 714	Unintentional Injury 778	Unintentional Injury 11,755	Unintentional Injury 24,516	Unintentional Injury 24,070	Malignant Neoplasms 35,587	Malignant Neoplasms 111,765	Heart Disease 531,583	Heart Disease 659,041
2	Short Gestation 3,445	Congenital Anomalies 416	Malignant Neoplasms 371	Suicide 534	Suicide 5,954	Suicide 8,059	Malignant Neoplasms 10,695	Heart Disease 31,138	Heart Disease 80,837	Malignant Neoplasms 435,462	Malignant Neoplasms 599,801
3	Unintentional Injury 1,266	Malignant Neoplasms 285	Congenital Anomalies 192	Malignant Neoplasms 404	Homicide 4,774	Homicide 5,341	Heart Disease 10,499	Unintentional Injury 23,359	Unintentional Injury 24,892	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 133,246	Unintentional Injury 173,040
4	SIDS 1,248	Homicide 284	Homicide 155	Homicide 191	Malignant Neoplasms 1,388	Malignant Neoplasms 3,577	Suicide 7,525	Liver Disease 8,098	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 18,743	Cerebro-vascular 129,193	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 156,979
5	Maternal Pregnancy Comp. 1,245	Heart Disease 133	Heart Disease 91	Congenital Anomalies 189	Heart Disease 872	Heart Disease 3,495	Homicide 3,446	Suicide 8,012	Diabetes Mellitus 15,508	Alzheimer's Disease 120,090	Cerebro-vascular 150,005
6	Placenta Cord Membranes 742	Influenza & Pneumonia 122	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 69	Heart Disease 87	Congenital Anomalies 390	Liver Disease 1,112	Liver Disease 3,417	Diabetes Mellitus 6,348	Liver Disease 14,385	Diabetes Mellitus 62,397	Alzheimer's Disease 121,499
7	Bacterial Sepsis 603	Perinatal Period 57	Influenza & Pneumonia 52	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 81	Diabetes Mellitus 248	Diabetes Mellitus 887	Diabetes Mellitus 2,228	Cerebro-vascular 5,153	Cerebro-vascular 12,931	Unintentional Injury 60,527	Diabetes Mellitus 87,647
8	Respiratory Distress 424	Septicemia 53	Cerebro-vascular 37	Influenza & Pneumonia 71	Influenza & Pneumonia 175	Cerebro-vascular 585	Cerebro-vascular 1,741	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 3,592	Suicide 8,238	Nephritis 42,230	Nephritis 51,565
9	Circulatory System Disease 406	Cerebro-vascular 52	Septicemia 36	Cerebro-vascular 48	Chronic Low. Respiratory Disease 168	Complicated Pregnancy 532	Influenza & Pneumonia 951	Nephritis 2,269	Nephritis 5,857	Influenza & Pneumonia 40,399	Influenza & Pneumonia 49,783
10	Necrotizing Enterocolitis 354	Benign Neoplasms 49	Benign Neoplasms 31	Benign Neoplasms 35	Cerebro-vascular 158	HIV 486	Septicemia 812	Septicemia 2,176	Septicemia 5,672	Parkinson's Disease 34,435	Suicide 47,511

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Produced By: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Data Source: National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), National Vital Statistics System