

February 15, 2022

Honorable Chairman Mark Pearson  
House Health and Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee  
Legislate Office Building Room 205  
North Main St  
Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI New Hampshire’s Opposition of HB 1077

Dear Chairman 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 New Hampshire, 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 opposition to HB 1077, repealing the prohibition on conversion therapy for minors.

One of the maxims that all health professionals should aspire to is to *do no harm*. The potential for harm caused by conversion therapy rises beyond shame and trauma; which can have lifelong impacts, and has the potential to be life threatening. As the chart to the right indicates, suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10-24 in NH (as well as nationally). According to the US Center for Disease Control, LGBT youth represent a significant high risk sub-group as evidenced by their rate of suicide attempts which is 4 times greater for LGB youth and 2 times greater for questioning youth, than that of straight youth. Additionally, suicide attempts by LGB youth and questioning youth are 4 to 6 times more likely to result in injury, poisoning, or overdose that requires treatment from a doctor



### NH Leading Causes of Death: 2015-2019

Rank	Age Groups										
	<1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	All Ages
1	Short Gestation 33	Unintentional Injury 15	Malignant Neoplasms 11	Malignant Neoplasms 11	Unintentional Injury 321	Unintentional Injury 816	Unintentional Injury 642	Malignant Neoplasms 866	Malignant Neoplasms 2,622	Heart Disease 11,250	Malignant Neoplasms 13,936
2	Congenital Anomalies 29	Congenital Anomalies 29	Unintentional Injury 11	Suicide 11	Suicide 152	Suicide 162	Malignant Neoplasms 211	Unintentional Injury 406	Heart Disease 1,395	Malignant Neoplasms 10,137	Heart Disease 13,416
3	Maternal Pregnancy Comp. 15	Homicide 15	Homicide 15	Unintentional Injury 15	Heart Disease 20	Malignant Neoplasms 62	Suicide 195	Heart Disease 577	Unintentional Injury 404	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 3,136	Unintentional Injury 4,469
4	Placenta Cord Membranes 15	Influenza & Pneumonia 15	Benign Neoplasms 15	Congenital Anomalies 15	Malignant Neoplasms 18	Heart Disease 49	Heart Disease 118	Heart Disease 118	Suicide 272	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 3,136	Alzheimer's Disease 2,267
5	Respiratory Disease 10	Malignant Neoplasms 10	Congenital Anomalies 10	Benign Neoplasms 10	Homicide 14	Liver Disease 15	Liver Disease 88	Liver Disease 169	Diabetes Mellitus 277	Diabetes Mellitus 2,200	Cerebrovascular Disease 2,486
6	Circulatory System Disease 10	Diabetes Mellitus 10	Heart Disease 10	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 10	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 10	Homicide 15	Diabetes Mellitus 31	Diabetes Mellitus 101	Liver Disease 277	Unintentional Injury 1,566	Alzheimer's Disease 2,296
7	Intrauterine Hypoxia 10	Heart Disease 10	Acute Bronchitis 10	Influenza & Pneumonia 10	Congenital Anomalies 10	Cerebrovascular 11	Homicide 25	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 81	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 277	Diabetes Mellitus 1,226	Diabetes Mellitus 1,646
8	Bacterial Sepsis 10	---	Diseases Of Appendix 10	Nephritis 10	Cerebrovascular 10	Congenital Anomalies 10	Cerebrovascular 17	Cerebrovascular 72	Cerebrovascular 175	Cerebrovascular 1,070	Influenza & Pneumonia 1,571
9	Unintentional Injury 10	---	---	Pneumonia 10	Diabetes Mellitus 10	Diabetes Mellitus 10	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 16	Septicemia 36	Nephritis 84	Nephritis 610	Influenza & Pneumonia 1,167
10	SIDS 10	---	---	---	Four Tied 10	Two Tied 10	Congenital Anomalies 11	Congenital Anomalies 24	Septicemia 63	Pharynx's Disease 786	Nephritis 925

Source: CDC WISQARS, 2014 -2018

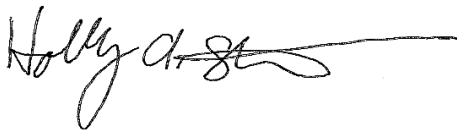
or nurse, compared to their straight peers. “Transgender and nonbinary youth were at increased risk of experiencing depressed mood, seriously considering suicide, and attempting suicide compared with cisgender lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and questioning youth.”<sup>1</sup>

However, more closely related to this bill, and the potential for harm of conversion therapy, is that LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection.

In addition, the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) released a study in 2017 showing decreased suicide rates both for LGB teens and for the teen population overall in states that have passed gay marriage.

The practice of conversion therapy in any form is a danger to the mental health and well-being of youth and young adults. Please vote HB 1077 as inexpedient to legislate. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly A. Stevens", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.

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<sup>1</sup> Understanding the Mental Health of Transgender and Nonbinary Youth, Price-Feeney, Myeshia, et. Al.; Journal of Adolescent Health 66 (2020) 684-690.