

April 6, 2022

Honorable Chair Rick Ladd
House Education Committee
Legislate Office Building Room 207
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. Below 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.



NH Leading Causes of Death: 2015-2019

Rank	Age Groups										All Ages
	<1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
1	Short Gestation 33	Unintentional Injury 10	Malignant Neoplasms 11	Malignant Neoplasms 11	Unintentional Injury 251	Unintentional Injury 418	Unintentional Injury 642	Malignant Neoplasms 866	Malignant Neoplasms 2,622	Heart Disease 11,250	Malignant Neoplasms 13,938
2	Congenital Anomalies 29	Congenital Anomalies 29	Unintentional Injury 11	Suicide 102	Suicide 102	Suicide 190	Malignant Neoplasms 311	Unintentional Injury 598	Heart Disease 1,395	Malignant Neoplasms 10,137	Heart Disease 13,416
3	Maternal Pregnancy Comp. 15	Homicide 15	Homicide 15	Unintentional Injury 20	Heart Disease 20	Malignant Neoplasms 62	Suicide 136	Heart Disease 577	Unintentional Injury 464	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 3,126	Unintentional Injury 4,469
4	Placenta Cord Membranes 15	Influenza & Pneumonia 18	Benign Neoplasms 18	Congenital Anomalies 18	Malignant Neoplasms 18	Heart Disease 49	Heart Disease 118	Heart Disease 372	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 397	Alzheimer's Disease 2,267	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 3,641
5	Respiratory System Disease 10	Malignant Neoplasms 10	Congenital Anomalies 10	Benign Neoplasms 10	Homicide 14	Liver Disease 15	Liver Disease 68	Liver Disease 169	Diabetes Mellitus 277	Cerebrovascular Disease 2,503	Cerebrovascular Disease 2,486
6	Circulatory System Disease 7	Diabetes Mellitus 7	Heart Disease 7	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 7	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 13	Homicide 13	Diabetes Mellitus 31	Diabetes Mellitus 101	Liver Disease 277	Unintentional Injury 1,566	Alzheimer's Disease 2,296
7	Influenza & Pneumonia 11	Heart Disease 11	Acute Bronchitis 11	Influenza & Pneumonia 11	Congenital Anomalies 11	Cerebrovascular Disease 11	Homicide 25	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 91	Suicide 223	Diabetes Mellitus 1,226	Diabetes Mellitus 1,646
8	Bacterial Sepsis 17	Diseases Of Appendix 17	Nephritis 17	Cerebrovascular Disease 17	Congenital Anomalies 17	Cerebrovascular Disease 17	Cerebrovascular Disease 73	Cerebrovascular Disease 175	Influenza & Pneumonia 1,070	Suicide 1,271	Suicide 1,271
9	Unintentional Injury 16	—	—	Pneumonia 16	Diabetes Mellitus 16	Diabetes Mellitus 16	Chronic Low Respiratory Disease 16	Septicemia 36	Nephritis 84	Nephritis 810	Influenza & Pneumonia 1,167
10	SIDS 15	—	—	Four Tied 15	Two Tied 15	Congenital Anomalies 11	Congenital Anomalies 24	Septicemia 83	Parkinson's Disease 786	Nephritis 926	Nephritis 926

Source: CDC WISQARS, 2014 -2018

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.¹ More precisely, results from the 2019 Youth Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System show that 18.8% of high

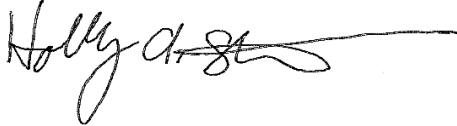
¹ “Understanding Suicide Risk And Prevention,” Health Affairs Health Policy Brief, January 29, 2021.

Find Help, Find Hope.

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, appearing to read "Holly A. Stevens", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.