



February 7, 2023

Honorable Chair Sharon Carson  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
State House Room 100  
North Main St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support of SB 179

Dear Chair Carson 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, 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 support of SB 179, relative to eliminating the use of seclusion as a form of punishment or discipline on children in schools and treatment facilities.

Seclusion is a kin to solitary confinement and can be extremely traumatic for a child. According to the U.S. Department of Education, “[p]hysical restraint or seclusion should not be used except in situations where the child’s behavior poses imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others and other interventions are ineffective and should be discontinued as soon as imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others has dissipated.”

Current NH law prohibits the use of seclusion as a form of punishment. However, despite this, there are antidotal reports that seclusion is being used as punishment in some facilities in our state. SB 179 would make it crystal clear that this is prohibited under state law, and simply adds clarifying language to our current law. For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee to vote ought to pass on SB 179. I am available to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

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

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.

*Find Help, Find Hope.*

NAMI New Hampshire • 85 North State Street • Concord, NH 03301  
InfoLine: 800-242-6264 • Tel. 603-225-5359 • Fax 603-228-8848 • [info@naminh.org](mailto:info@naminh.org) / [www.NAMINH.org](http://www.NAMINH.org)