



April 2, 2024

Honorable Chair Ruth Ward
Senate Education Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 101
33 N State St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for HB 1109

Dear Chair Ward and Committee Members:

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, 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 HB 1109, relative to requiring student identification cards to include the helpline for the National Alliance for Eating Disorders and the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

NAMI NH applauds the efforts of the legislature in passing HB 35 in 2023 and, despite its necessary veto, we support efforts to advance the policy again with an alternate helpline due to the pressing need that eating disorders present.

An estimated 9% of Americans will experience an eating disorder in their lifetime, and those who do are at a significant risk of mortality. Each year, 10,200 individuals die due to an eating disorder, and individuals with an eating disorder are 2-11x more likely to attempt suicide.¹ “22% of children and adolescents have unhealthy eating behaviors that could lead to or indicate an eating disorder.”¹ However, “just 20% of adolescents with eating disorders seek treatment.”¹

¹Eating Disorder Statistics, *National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD)*, <https://anad.org/eating-disorder-statistic/>

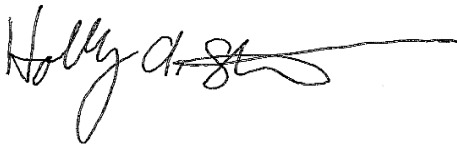
Find Help, Find Hope.

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 / www.NAMINH.org

To address these startling statistics, it is crucial that we increase access to, and awareness of, available resources to treat these highly fatal illnesses. HB 1109 is a fantastic opportunity to reduce harm and save lives by placing a valuable resource right at the fingertips of vulnerable youth, who might not otherwise receive the help they need.

For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee to vote Ought to Pass on HB 1109.

Sincerely,

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

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.