



**NAMI New Hampshire Response to NH Senate Votes
Curtailing Rights of LGBTQ+ Granite Staters
(April 6, 2024)**

CONCORD, NH – NAMI NH is profoundly disappointed that on Friday some NH legislators voted to curtail the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals – particularly targeting trans youth. Here in New Hampshire, suicide is the leading cause of death for children ages 10 – 14 and the second leading cause of death for those age 15 – 34. LGBTQ+ youth are 4 times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers. Data from the Trevor Project indicates that discriminatory legislation targeting the rights of LGBTQ+ folks has a negative impact upon the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth. There is no question that our young people are watching and listening.

Next week, the NH Senate plans to vote on additional legislation designed to further curtail the rights of LGBTQ+ Granite Staters. NAMI NH urges our legislators to recognize that engaging in rhetoric calling for this type of discriminatory legislation can harm the mental health of LGBTQ+ young people. There is an opportunity to chart a different course – one that would shift the focus back to addressing, rather than exacerbating, our youth mental health crisis.

“These bills and the rhetoric that surrounds them are likely to exacerbate NH’s youth mental health crisis – at a time when our mental health providers are already stretched beyond capacity. NAMI NH is unwavering in our commitment to all Granite Staters having access to hope, help and health, so that they are able to live a full life in their community,” stated NAMI NH Executive Director Susan Stearns. “We remain committed to supporting all people impacted by mental illness and suicide – including our LGBTQ+ friends, loved ones, and neighbors.”

For those young people who are watching – we see you, we hear you, we are here for you. If you or someone you know needs immediate support, you can call, text, or chat confidentially with a trained crisis worker 24/7 through 988 at no cost. You can reach specialized LGBTQ+ affirming counseling by texting Q to 988 or pressing 3 when calling. Please do not hesitate to reach out for support – you matter.

NAMI NH is a grassroots organization working to improve the lives of all people through support, education, and advocacy. Last year we served nearly 44,000 individuals – made possible through the steadfast efforts of our 64 staff members and over 200 statewide volunteers. NAMI NH offers free support and education programs, as well as information and resources to all Granite Staters. To learn more, visit our website at www.NAMINH.org. If you are struggling to hold onto hope, we can help. You are not alone.