



February 10, 2025

Honorable Chairman David Rochefort
Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Legislative Office Building Room 101
33 N State St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for SB 136

Chairman Rochefort and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Sam Hawkins, and I am the Public Policy Assistant 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 SB 136, establishing an uncompensated care assessment, fund, and committee within the department of insurance.

As a crucial safety-net provider, New Hampshire's ten Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) work to ensure that every Granite Stater, including some of our most vulnerable community members, have access to the care and supports they need to get well, stay well, and thrive. Funded largely by Medicaid reimbursements, for CMHCs, the cost of providing that care often outpaces their reimbursement. Add onto that challenge the fact that CMHCs shoulder the incredibly heavy burden of providing uncompensated care, you can imagine that these programs face a generally precarious financial situation that makes it difficult to provide their services, as well as recruit and retain the staff necessary for doing so.

Though the majority of people receiving services at the CMHCs are covered under Medicaid, there is a considerable population of folks without Medicaid that receive services they are unable to pay for. One contributor to this is, even for those with commercial insurance, there are some services that patients are receiving at the CMHCs that are not covered by their carrier. These include critical services such as case management that the commercial insurers deem "social supports" and thus not reimbursable. In this instance, private insurers are passing off the cost of medically necessary services for their members onto the CMHCs, and by extension, the state.

As mentioned above, these centers are our safety net. To put it frankly: if we lose these services, there will be nowhere else for Granite Staters in need to go. As such, we cannot afford to lose or see a reduction in the services provided by the CMHCs.

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

The state needs a solution to fund these crucial services – SB 136 finds a way to do that without increasing costs for the average Granite Stater by applying a small assessment to insurers, guaranteeing that they contribute to the services our community needs. For that reason, NAMI NH urges the committee to vote Ought to Pass for SB 136.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel C. Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'S'.

Samuel C. Hawkins