



NAMI New Hampshire

January 21, 2026

Honorable Chairman Howard Pearl
Senate Executive Departments and Administration Committee
State House Room 103
107 N Main St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for SB 423

Chairman Pearl and Committee Members:

On behalf of NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, I write in support of SB 423, reestablishing the commission to study the incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder in first responders.

Nationwide, more attention is being paid to the impacts of mental illness on our communities – impacts our first responders are not immune to. The difficulty of the situations first responders often face cannot be understated. These brave folks are usually the first to arrive at difficult and dangerous scenes, dealing directly with tragedies that may have a direct impact on their own physical and mental health and wellbeing.

As way of background, NAMI NH Executive Director Susan Stearns sat on this commission, and as such, we can testify firsthand to the work that this group has accomplished. Over the history of this commission, it has carried out extensive study and generated meaningful discussion of the resources and supports that can be strengthened for first responders in New Hampshire. Through a wholistic approach, driven by the lived experience and expertise of its members, this commission has carefully considered and made recommendations regarding workers compensation and other benefits, certification of comfort dogs and additional supports, considerations of community culture surrounding mental health in first responders, and much more.

SB 423 offers an opportunity for this commission to continue its diligent work and continue to strengthen and coordinate the resources New Hampshire needs to support our current and future first responders. As such, NAMI NH urges the committee to support SB 423.

Sincerely,

Sam Hawkins

Find Help, Find Hope.

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