

February 4, 2026

Honorable Chairman John Hunt
House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee
Granite Place Room 229
1 Granite Pl, Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for HB 1744

Chairman Hunt and Committee Members:

On behalf of NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, I write in support of HB 1744, relative to oversight and reporting requirements for health insurance carriers regarding mental health coverage.

As an organization serving and comprised of individuals and family members with lived experience navigating the mental health system, we have frequent conversations with people urgently seeking mental health care, but who are unable to access it. In New Hampshire, 71,000 adults reported needing mental health treatment but not receiving it, with cost as a prevailing factor in not receiving treatment, according to data from 2018-2019. Additionally, Granite Staters are four times as likely to be forced out of network for mental health care than primary care.¹

Already this legislative session, numerous bills have been heard that, like HB 1744, aim to understand and address New Hampshire's pervasive challenges with mental health access. When discussing this issue, we frequently hear that current policies are sufficient for enabling access to care. If that is the case, we urge the committee to ask why Granite Staters and their families continue to be unable to access or afford the care they need, leading to costly and harmful long-term outcomes.

It is no question that the factors impacting mental health access in NH and nationally are complex and varied, and there is likely no one solution. However, HB 1744 is a crucial tool to help us form a comprehensive understanding of the factors at play in New Hampshire so that we can take an informed approach to addressing them. This bill takes a holistic view not only of commercially insured plans, but also the state Medicaid program, seeking to assess the prevalence of challenges in utilization, approvals and denials, network adequacy, and parity.

Bolstering access to care in New Hampshire will require collaboration between state agencies, the legislature, health plans, stakeholders, and the public – all of whom already recognize the issue at

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hand. HB 1744 works to ensure that all parties have the information they need to strengthen the policies exacerbating the mental health access crisis. As such, NAMI NH urges the committee to recommend Ought to Pass for HB 1744.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Hawkins".

Sam Hawkins

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