



February 17, 2026

Honorable Chairman William Gannon
Senate Judiciary Committee
State House Room 100
107 North Main Street, Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH opposition to SB 667

Dear Chair Gannon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Holly Stevens, and I am the Director of Public Policy at NAMI New Hampshire, 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 opposition to SB 667, relative to the assault of emergency room personnel.

NAMI NH firmly believes in, and supports, the critical services that emergency room personnel provide to the safety and wellbeing of our communities. Oftentimes, individuals in mental health crisis will find themselves in an emergency room on an involuntary status on some of the worst days of their life. We find that hospital personnel are an important element of mental health crisis response when a person ends up boarding in an emergency room, and their safety and wellbeing must be crucially protected. However, we have significant concerns that SB 667 will significantly and punitively impact individuals in mental health crisis, and believe that people in crisis deserve treatment and support, not to be arrested, jailed, and faced with disproportionate penalties.

Under current law, police cannot arrest a person for a misdemeanor offense unless it is committed in front of the officer, or if certain conditions are met (concealment of evidence of the offense or belief the person will cause further personal injury or property damage). SB 667 raises simple assault to a felony level when committed against emergency room personnel, essentially doing an end run around the warrantless arrest statute. As mentioned earlier, folks with a mental illness often interact with emergency room personnel on the worst days of their life. As such, their actions may be reckless or unpredictable and may result in bodily injury. Therefore,

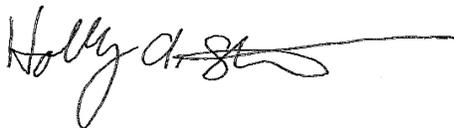
Find Help, Find Hope.

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

we expect this bill would cause more individuals with a mental illness to often face the higher penalties established in this bill due to their frequent interactions with first responders.

It is paramount that people in psychiatric crises continue to have the due process protections afforded to them under law. If SB 667 passes, we expect that more people in a mental health crisis will face higher level charges and languish in county jails, which would only serve to exacerbate the crisis they are experiencing. For these reasons, NAMI NH opposes SB 667, suggesting that instead, this issue be further studied to gather data on these incidents.

Sincerely,

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

Holly A, Stevens, Esq.