



April 21, 2026

Honorable Chairman Bill Gannon  
Senate Judiciary Committee  
State House Room 100  
107 N Main St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Opposition to HB 1217, HB 1299, & HB 1447

Chairman Gannon and Committee Members:

On behalf of NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, I write in opposition to HB 1217, HB 1299, and HB 1447, which would expose transgender and nonbinary Granite Staters to harmful discrimination within their community.

As an organization committed to strengthening and protecting mental health and preventing suicide, NAMI NH is gravely concerned by the harmful impacts of discrimination upon mental health. Research consistently demonstrates that experiences with stigma and discrimination have a negative effect on mental health and help-seeking and increases the risk of suicide in affected communities. The impacts of stigma and discrimination are pervasive, jeopardizing mental health and wellness not just for the individual, but throughout an entire community. For transgender and nonbinary people specifically, these challenges have been shown to contribute to higher rates of negative mental health outcomes, including increased occurrences of suicidality. A 2024 study showed that 68% of transgender and nonbinary young people in New Hampshire reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety, 44% experienced depression, and 40% seriously considered attempting suicide.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to reiterate that there is nothing inherent about one's status as a transgender or nonbinary person that contributes to poor mental health outcomes – rather, we firmly believe that these outcomes primarily result from experiences with stigma and discrimination and being unable to receive necessary care and supports. In the aforementioned study, 89% of LGBTQ+ young people reported that politics negatively impacted their well-being, and 31% reported that they or their family have considered leaving New Hampshire because of LGBTQ+-related politics.<sup>1</sup>

HB 1217, 1299, and 1447 would all serve to expose transgender and nonbinary Granite Staters to discrimination in their communities – at work, in treatment, in recreation, and beyond. This session and over recent years, several bills have been advanced that would do the same. However, this set of legislation goes even further, with the policies in these bills not simply allowing but *requiring* the implementation of this harmful, sex-based classification in many facilities. This would have a

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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](mailto:info@naminh.org) / [www.NAMINH.org](http://www.NAMINH.org)

chilling effect on not only transgender and nonbinary people themselves, but also their families, their loved ones, and the communities they have found and formed in our state.

Similar legislation has been firmly rejected by the state's citizens and leadership many times, having been vetoed by former NH Governor Chris Sununu and twice by sitting Governor Kelly Ayotte, as recently as earlier this year. New Hampshire has a long history of fiercely protecting the rights of its residents. All Granite Staters deserve to live full, healthy, safe lives within their community, an ideal which has been continuously affirmed and protected by advocates, community members, and state leaders alike.

LGBTQ+ young people report lower rates of attempting suicide when they have access to affirming spaces and communities.<sup>1</sup> It is critical that public policies and laws focus on practices that improve mental health outcomes for all transgender and nonbinary individuals. HB 1217, 1299, 1447, and other bills being considered this session work in direct opposition to that goal. For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee to recommend inexpedient to legislate for any legislation that would enable harmful discrimination against transgender and nonbinary people.

Sincerely,

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

Sam Hawkins

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<sup>1</sup>2024 Survey on the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Young People in New Hampshire, The Trevor Project