



April 8, 2026

Honorable Chairman Bob Lynn  
House Judiciary Committee  
Granite Place Room 230  
1 Granite Pl, Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Opposition to SB 459

Chairman Lynn and Committee Members:

On behalf of NAMI NH, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, I write in opposition to SB 459, exempting classification of individuals based on biological sex from the definition of an unlawful discriminatory practice in certain limited circumstances.

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. 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>

SB 459 would expose transgender and nonbinary Granite Staters to discrimination in multiple environments; of especially grave concern is this bill's focus on prisons, houses of corrections, and mental health facilities and treatment centers. In these instances, a person would be committed involuntarily and then subjected to discrimination that is harmful to their ongoing recovery.

*Find Help, Find Hope.*

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Further, SB 459 and several similar bills filed this session continue to have a chilling effect on transgender people and their families, loved ones, and communities due to the harmful stigma and discrimination associated with the policies and in ongoing discussions of the bills. Similar legislation has been rejected by Granite Staters 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.

It is critical that public policies and laws focus on practices that improve mental health outcomes for all people, including those who are transgender and nonbinary. However, SB 459 and several other bills introduced in this state work in direct opposition to that goal. For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee to recommend SB 459 inexpedient to legislate.

Sincerely,

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

Sam Hawkins