



# NAMI New Hampshire

April 30, 2024

Honorable Chair Ruth Ward  
Senate Education Committee  
Legislative Office Building Room 101  
33 N State St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Opposition to HB 1205

Dear Chair Ward and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Sam Hawkins, and I am the Public Policy Assistant at NAMI NH, 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 HB 1205, relative to women's school sports.

Acceptance and support within one's community plays a key role in mental health. As such, it should be our priority to ensure that everyone within our communities is accepted and able to live fully in accordance with their identity, free from stigma and discrimination. This is crucial to all aspects of life: at home, at work or school, and in one's interests. This includes athletics, where individuals, in this case youth, learn to express themselves and connect with their peers and community.

Resulting from experiences with discrimination, stigma, and exclusion, transgender and nonbinary youth often experience negative mental health outcomes. SB 375 further jeopardizes the mental health of our trans and nonbinary youth by perpetuating damaging stigma and eliminating affirming environments. It is crucial that our policies promote mental wellness and increase access to social support and affirmation, rather than limiting it. For these reasons, NAMI NH urges the committee to vote ITL for HB 1205.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samuel C. Hawkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Samuel C. Hawkins

*Find Help, Find Hope.*

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