

As a scientist and a healthcare worker I cannot stay silent in face of this proposed bill. This bill, demanding for the dissolution of the office of health equity, argues that by doing so it will save a combined total of roughly 169000\$ yearly from federal and general funds. This amount is meager when compared to the impact that the office of health equity has on New Hampshire communities at large. This office, originally named the Office of Minority Health, was established in 1999 with the mission to “ensure **all residents** of New Hampshire have access to DHHS services and to improve the health of minorities.” This office was renamed in 2016 to the Office of Health Equity, which in my opinion does a more accurate job of representing a commitment to all residents of New Hampshire. Furthermore, I urge you to consider that in highlighting and serving the needs of “minorities”, that this includes our elderly population, our disabled populations and especially our veteran populations. Dissolving this office would be a mistake that would lower the standard of living and standard for healthcare for every single one of New Hampshire’s residents.

In regards to the proposed dissolution of the Governor’s advisory council on Diversity and Inclusion, I also oppose. Similarly to the lowered standard of living and/or healthcare that would occur with the dissolution of the Health Equity office, getting rid of this council will have similar repercussions. Since its creation in 2017, the diversity and inclusion council’s work thus far has had an impact on Human Rights legislation as well as The 10-year Mental Health Plan of 2019. Over its short lifetime so far, the council on Diversity and Inclusion has worked for the betterment of everyone who lives in New Hampshire. The council has shown its commitment in establishing subcommittees to “learn about the needs of the communities, [and] engage with or find points for cooperation, collaboration and education”. They have had collaborative relationships with the council of housing stability, a program working to help transition our homeless population into safe and stable homes.

I urge you to look into the far-reaching impact that getting rid of these councils and offices will have on New Hampshire as a whole. I urge you to remember your elderly constituents, your disabled constituents, your homeless, your veterans, your neighbors, your communities. I urge you to look at our past with a critical eye and evaluate. I urge you to look to the future and open your mind to what it may hold if instead of tearing down our pillars of community support, we invest in supporting everyone within our state lines. What kind of thriving, healthy, and worthy place could we make our state if given the chance.