

April 16, 2025

The Honorable Bob Lynn, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 206-208  
33 North State Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Re: New Futures' opposition to HB 268, permitting classification of individuals based on biological sex under certain limited circumstances

Dear Chairman Lynn, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

New Futures appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to SB 268, permitting classification of individuals based on biological sex under certain limited circumstances.

New Futures is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that solves problems through policy change. New Futures is dedicated to supporting and strengthening a comprehensive and integrated System of Care for children and youth who experience behavioral health challenges in New Hampshire.

**New Futures strongly opposes SB 268 because permits discrimination against transgender and nonbinary young people, who have the best mental health outcomes when they feel supported in their communities and schools.**

In 2022, 39% of LGBTQ youth in New Hampshire seriously considered suicide; 55% of LGBTQ youth reported experiencing symptoms of depression; and 68% of youth experienced discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.<sup>1</sup> Poor mental health outcomes are directly tied to feelings of rejection in the youths' families, schools, and communities. These statistics are stark reminders that our state still has work to do to ensure that our youth, particularly LGBTQ youth, feel welcome and safe in their communities.

In fact, when young people are able to live their lives as their preferred gender, their mental health outcomes are on par with their peers who identify as cisgender.<sup>2</sup> Bills such as SB 268, that permit discrimination against young people living their true identities, which increases the dangerous feelings of rejection that contribute to poor mental health outcomes.

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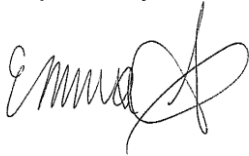
<sup>1</sup> 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health in New Hampshire, Trevor Project.

<sup>2</sup> Olson, Kristina, et al. Mental Health of Transgender Children Who Are Supported in Their Identities (2016).

The specific permitted instances of discrimination in SB 268 contribute to poor mental health outcomes for LGBTQ youth as well. Participation in sports has been shown to decrease risk of anxiety, depression, and suicide attempts. Further, sports participation has been shown to reduce tobacco and illegal drug use.<sup>3</sup> Something as simple as affirming trans youths' gender identity through allowing use of the bathroom corresponding with their chosen gender identity has been shown to improve mental health.<sup>4</sup>

Allowing trans and nonbinary youth to participate in life just as their cisgender counterparts - through acts as commonplace as participating in sports and using the bathroom that matches their preferred gender - clearly improves their mental health outcomes. As proposed, SB 268 would allow discrimination based on gender identity in certain instances, directly putting trans and nonbinary youth at risk of experiencing poor mental health consequences and higher risk of suicide. Voting SB 268 inexpedient to legislate is a clear way to continue to demonstrate New Hampshire's commitment to improving the mental health of all children.

Respectfully,



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Children's Behavioral Health Policy Coordinator  
New Futures, Inc.

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<sup>3</sup> Goldberg, Shoshana K., Importance of Sports Participation for Transgender Youth (2021).

<sup>4</sup> Beemyn, Brett, Making Campuses More Inclusive of Transgender Students (2008).