



Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce Support for HB 1653

Wayne MacDonald, Chairman
Committee on Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs
Room 205, Legislative Office Building
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

January 12, 2026

Dear Chairman MacDonald and members of the Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs committee:

My name is Wendy Hunt, and I am the President and CEO of the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce (GNCC). GNCC represents more than 460 businesses across Southern New Hampshire, employing thousands of New Hampshire residents and generating hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity. On behalf of our member businesses and the broader community, I write in support of HB 1653, relative to emergency medical care provided at free-standing hospital emergency facilities.

As you may be aware, a free-standing hospital emergency facility is currently under construction on Amherst Street in Nashua by Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), which purchased Catholic Medical Center (CMC) in Manchester, New Hampshire, in February 2025.

Our concern is that patients who arrive at this free-standing emergency department and require a higher level of care must be given a clear choice regarding where they are transferred. They should not be automatically transported by ambulance to Catholic Medical Center in Manchester—more than 17 miles away—when Nashua has two critical-care hospitals located just 3 to 5 miles from downtown.

HB1653 protects patients and their families by ensuring they can choose the hospital that best meets their needs, based on proximity and existing relationships with local providers—especially when time is critical, as it is in many emergency situations. Keeping care local also promotes better continuity of care and allows families, many of whom may have limited transportation options, to remain close to their loved ones during recovery.

Both St. Joseph Hospital and Southern New Hampshire Medical Center are nonprofit institutions with deep ties to the greater Nashua community. They provide care regardless of a patient's ability to pay, employ local residents, and make significant contributions to the overall health and well-being of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Hunt, President & CEO
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