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I am a 17 year old student of 2026 in high school Spark Academy of Advanced Technologies. Spark Academy is a small school here in Manchester New Hampshire, and even still, me and several friends of mine within this school have needed mental aid within my years here. Speaking on myself to begin with, my anxiety has had crippling impact on my high school years, making it far harder for me to focus on and nail down certain subjects at points, even being a part of what clearly led me to fail some of my classes the first time around, which I am still having to make up for to this day. Thankfully, I have received critical aid in my time at Spark Academy from well trained staff members which has helped lead me to much greater success in my years here. If it weren't for the mental aid I have received from staff within Spark Academy, I don't know *where* I would be today. Even still, a major part of my success in my positive mental state has been in good part due to how positive an impact the staff of Spark Academy have been in my life. Not only this, but I am most certainly not the only one. All through these high school years of mine, I have seen time and time again the negative mental states of my friends and peers that have been in urgent need of help from people like properly trained staff of our schools. I've been able to do some help myself, but that help is certainly not all of the help those friends of mine have needed, and some of my peers are simply out of my reach entirely for me to provide them with the aid they could still receive from properly trained staff. The youth of my generation and those younger than it need properly trained help to be able to step ahead and succeed in life, otherwise, some could stagger and fail in critical parts of schooling, or worse, end up physically harming themselves due to their suffering mental states. I know this for absolute certain, as I've had to help convince multiple of my generation out of

literal suicide. It baffles me that some people don't realize how incredibly necessary properly trained help for the mental state of our youth really is, as without it, several of us could literally be dead. Suicide was even listed as the second leading cause of death in children ages 10 to 14 in the state of New Hampshire in SFY 2024.

It is with all of that stated that I would like to state my absolute opposition to the proposed amendments in HB 1635 in New Hampshire. We cannot simply lower our state's efforts to train school staff to properly educate our youth on the absolute importance of their lives, and just how much they mean to this world. Childhood is a vital part of every life in this state. All children deserve the best chance they can get at reaching a positive end to their lives, and their school lives are some of the most important ways for them to reach such a thing. To allow this, we must have all staff members of our school environments be perfectly capable at all times of aiding the mental health of our youth. This means that not only must the staff of our schools be trained in suicide awareness to begin with, but this training must be kept up with annually, no exceptions. Exception to this ruling could lead to some staff becoming less and less capable of this vital education, and eventually varying in their capabilities within it, and allowing children to be less well-educated in their mental health. This further variation in the mental health of our youth could eventually end up even leading to increased youth mortality rates within our state. In other words: more of our children could be dying!

All-in-all, if any amendments should be made to RSA 193-J-2, it should honestly be an increase in some way to the amount of focus on youth mental health in our school systems, rather than the opposite. I really do hope this statement from a high school senior student of the New Hampshire school system has helped to show just how important the current form of RSA

193-J-2 is to the state of New Hampshire, and that it may continue best helping all of the lives it saves.

Citations

“New Hampshire Child Fatality Review Committee Annual Report State Fiscal Year 2024” *Child-Fatality-Review-Report-2024-Final.Pdf*, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services,
www.dhhs.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt476/files/documents2/child-fatality-review-report-2024-final.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan. 2026.