



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU**  
Governor

April 6, 2022

Dear Members of the House Education Committee,

Up to one in five children ages 3-17 in the United States have a mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral disorder.<sup>1</sup> A recent study by the CDC found that the national suicide rate for people ages 10-24 increased by 57% between 2007-2018.<sup>2</sup> According to the National Alliance for Mental Illness, suicide is the second leading cause of death in young people aged 10-34.<sup>3</sup> These worrying recent trends have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SB 234 looks to aid and provide resources to New Hampshire's students by requiring schools who issue student identification cards to include the National Suicide Prevention Hotline Number. This bill is simple and offers help to students who may be in need during moments of crisis. While this may seem like a small piece of legislation, it provides hope. If it saves even one life, it will be worth it.

States across the country have already taken this step. States like Illinois, South Carolina, California, and Arizona all require the Suicide Prevention Hotline number to be present on all student identification cards. Others have made the number more accessible to young people. Citizens of our own state have asked lawmakers to act on this most important issue: the safety and lives of our children.

This legislation, as well as the National Suicide Prevention Hotline's transfer to a 3-digit emergency number later this year, will increase accessibility to essential mental health and suicide prevention resources for New Hampshire residents, especially our students and young population. Thank you for your serious consideration.

I hope this committee will join me in supporting SB 234.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chitah T. Sununu".

Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor

<sup>1</sup>Children's Mental Health. <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/data.html>

<sup>2</sup>State Suicide Rates Among Adolescents and Young Adults Aged 10-24: United States, 2000-2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr69/nvsr-69-11-508.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Suicide is a Leading Cause of Death in the United States. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide>