



June 30, 2025

The Honorable Mindy Domb  
Chair, Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery  
24 Beacon Street, Room 33  
Boston, MA 02133

The Honorable John Velis  
Chair, Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery  
24 Beacon Street, Room 513  
Boston, MA 02133

**RE: Strong support for H.2221 & S.1384, *An Act relative to student mental health***

Dear Chair Domb, Chair Velis, and Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health (MAMH), I write to urge the passage of H.2221 & S.1384, *An Act Relative to Student Mental Health* (Reps. Jack Patrick Lewis and Natalie Higgins, Sen. Jo Comerford), which would require public and charter schools serving students in grades 6-12 and institutes of higher education to print the number for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline on student identification cards.

According to a 2024 poll by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, while 67% of Americans said they have at least heard of 988, only 23% say they are somewhat familiar with the service.<sup>i</sup> Suicide remains the second leading cause of death among people ages 15 to 24 in the Commonwealth.<sup>ii</sup> H.2221 & S.1384 present an opportunity to raise awareness about this free, life-saving resource, which is available 24/7 to support people in times of crisis.

Support for increasing awareness of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has been gaining traction in the Commonwealth and across the nation. Seventeen states have already enacted legislation that requires crisis line numbers on college and university student identification cards. In 2019, Boston 25 News highlighted how some schools in the Commonwealth have begun adopting this practice, primarily led by students.<sup>iii</sup>

We appreciate your and your colleagues' dedication to improving the mental health and well being of the Commonwealth's residents. We wholeheartedly appreciate your collaboration in shaping a healthier future for generations to come. Please do not hesitate to reach out at [jessicalarochelle@mamh.org](mailto:jessicalarochelle@mamh.org) if MAMH can be a resource to your work. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jessica Larochelle, MPH  
Director for Public Policy and Government Relations

Cc: The Honorable Jack Patrick Lewis  
The Honorable Natalie Higgins  
The Honorable Jo Comerford

---

---

<sup>i</sup> National Alliance on Mental Illness. Poll of Public Perspectives on 988 & Crisis Response. 2024. Available at: <https://www.nami.org/support-education/publications-reports/survey-reports/poll-of-public-perspectives-on-988-crisis-response-2024/#:~:text=Key%20Findings%20on%20988,top%20three%20most%20important%20were>:

<sup>ii</sup> MA Department of Public Health. Massachusetts Deaths 2022. December 2024. Available at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2022-death-report-pdf/download>.

<sup>iii</sup> Chris Flanagan, Boston 25 News. Teen leads charge to put suicide hotline on student IDs, could expand statewide. 13 September 2019. Available at: <https://www.boston25news.com/news/teen-leads-charge-to-put-suicide-hotline-on-student-ids-could-expand-statewide/985677700/>.