THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SUPREME COURT

No. 2022-0523

State of New Hampshire

V.

Daniel LaGuerre

MEMORANDUM IN LIEU OF BRIEF PURSUANT TO SUPREME COURT RULE 16(4)(B)

The defendant appeals the superior court's denial of his emergency motion to amend bail due to alleged inadequate medical care provided to him by the Hillsborough County House of Corrections ("HCHOC"). For the reasons stated below, this Court should affirm the superior court's order denying his motion.

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS AND OF THE CASE

A. FACTS UNDERLYING THE DEFENDANT'S ARREST

On August 7, 2022, at approximately 12:30 a.m., Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department Sergeant Xenakis and Deputy Hyland were dispatched to a "domestic disturbance" in Pembroke, New Hampshire. DA¹

¹ Citations to the record are as follows:

[&]quot;DA" refers to the defendant's appendix to his brief and page number;

[&]quot;DB" refers to the defendant's brief and page number;

[&]quot;SA" refers to the State's addendum and page number.

19. The caller who reported the domestic disturbance was A.B., the defendant's wife. DA 19. She told dispatch that the defendant "put a knife to her throat and assaulted her." DA 19.

When the officers arrived, Sergeant Xenakis spoke to the victim outside while Deputy Hyland spoke to the defendant. DA 19. The defendant told the deputy that the victim bit him and that he did not touch her. DA 19. The victim told the sergeant that the defendant strangled her by placing her in a headlock with his arm and held a knife near her throat. DA 19. The victim told the sergeant that the strangulation impeded her breathing. DA 19. The victim had a red mark on her neck and "explained the same scenario multiple times to Sergeant Xenakis." DA 19.

Prior to his arrest, the defendant showed Deputy Hyland a video he took of the victim after the assault. DA 20. In the video, the victim asked the defendant "why he wanted to kill her" and referenced being strangled. DA 20. In response, the defendant told the victim that she had "no evidence." DA 20. Deputy Hyland arrested the defendant on scene. DA 20. After the defendant was booked, Bail Commissioner Wesoly released the defendant on personal recognizance bail with an arraignment date of September 9, 2022. DA 20.

On August 24, 2022, at approximately 11:05 p.m., Peterborough Police Officer Craig Edsall spoke with the victim over the telephone. She told the officer that she was in a hotel room in Nashua because the defendant had assaulted her at their residence in Peterborough earlier that evening. DA 28. The victim said that the defendant punched her in the face, kicked her, and strangled her. DA 28. After the assault, the defendant's mother drove her to Nashua. DA 28. She also reported that the defendant

had a black handgun in his waistband that was "for police" if she and the defendant were found together. DA 28.

Officers Linehan and Vincent spoke with the victim at the hotel. DA 28. The victim told these officers that the defendant punched her in the face two times, kicked her in the back three times, and then pinned her down on the floor and strangled her by sitting on top of her and using both hands to squeeze her throat. DA 28. The victim said this impeded her breathing. DA 28. Both officers observed red marks on the victim's arms and neck. DA 28.

B. PROCEDURAL HISTORY OF DEFENDANT'S CRIMINAL CASE

On August 26, 2022, the State charged the defendant with a class B felony second degree assault – domestic violence – strangulation charge and a class B felony criminal threatening – domestic violence charge, stemming from the defendant's conduct on August 7, 2022. DA 17-18. The State also charged the defendant with a class B felony criminal restraint charge, a class B felony second degree assault – domestic violence – strangulation charge, a class A misdemeanor stalking charge, and two class A misdemeanor simple assault – domestic violence charges stemming from his conduct on August 24, 2022. DA 24-26; SA 21-22.

That same day, the superior court (*Delker*, J.) held a bail hearing and issued a bail order placing the defendant in preventive detention "based on clear and convincing evidence that the defendant's release will endanger the safety of the defendant or of the public." DA 21-23; RSA 597:2, III(a).

The defendant was also ordered to have no contact with the victim. DA 21-23.

On September 2, 2022, the defendant filed an emergency bail motion claiming that he was not receiving adequate medical care at the HCHOC. DA 2. Specifically, the defendant claimed in his motion that he was not receiving medication for his liver disease, seizures, high blood sugar, and anemia. DA 2. The State did not file a pleading in response.

On September 6, 2022, the superior court (*Delker*, J.) issued an order finding that, because the defendant's bail motion argues that his "continued detention violates his constitutional right to due process," the appropriate "procedural vehicle for his requested relief" is a "classic claim for a writ of habeas corpus." DB 21. The superior court further found that because the defendant's motion does not assert that he is no longer a danger to the public or that he is more likely to abide by less restrictive conditions, the defendant cannot find relief through the bail statute. DB 21-22. The superior court also found that the defendant's motion did not "provide the [HCHOC] notice or an opportunity to respond" to the defendant's claims of inadequate medical care. DB 22. The superior court ended its order by telling the defendant that he "may refile a proper request for relief with notice to the county house of corrections and opportunity to respond." DB 22.

On September 7, 2022, the defendant filed an emergency reconsideration motion arguing that the bail statute provides the defendant a vehicle for relief because it requires a court to consider the defendant's safety in issuing a bail order. DA 14. The defendant also argued that continuing to hold the defendant at the HCHOC without proper medical

treatment would violate his constitutional and statutory rights, which should be considered pursuant to the bail statute. DA 14-15. Last, the defendant argued that the superior court could "issue an order that [the HCHOC] is bound to follow," or could order that the defendant receive medical care at a hospital, or be "confined to the New Hampshire Hospital," or placed on restrictive home confinement. DA 14-15.

The superior court denied this motion for reconsideration on September 8, 2022. DB 23. The superior court wrote that it "has not denied the defendant's request on its merits" and invited the defendant again to file a petition for writ of habeas corpus or to "seek other civil relief." DB 23. The superior court also found that the defendant "quoted RSA 597:2, III(a) out of context," and that "it is clear from reading the statute as a whole the defendant's safety is only a relevant factor if release of the defendant to community would [en]danger his safety." DB 23. The superior court also found that the HCHOC is not a party to the defendant's prosecution and "[t]he prosecutor is not responsible for the defendant's conditions of confinement and should not be saddled with the burden of proving whether the house of corrections is fulfilling its responsibility." DB 23. This appeal followed.

<u>ARGUMENT</u>

I. STANDARD OF REVIEW

This Court reviews trial court decisions "regarding bail and recognizances" using the unsustainable exercise of discretion standard. *Petition of Second Chance Bail Bonds*, 171 N.H. 807, 813 (2019). "In determining whether a trial court ruling is an unsustainable exercise of discretion, [this Court] consider[s] 'whether the record establishes an objective basis sufficient to sustain the discretionary judgment made." *State v. Spauling*, 172 N.H. 205, 207-08 (2019) (quoting *State v. Lambert*, 147 N.H. 295, 296 (2001)). "To show that the trial court's decision is not sustainable, a party 'must demonstrate that the court's ruling was clearly untenable or unreasonable to the prejudice of [that party's] case." *Id*.

This Court reviews a trial court's bail determination *de novo* when review requires a statutory interpretation. *See State v. Zhukovskyy*, 174 N.H. 430, 433 (2021) (holding that because the defendant appealed the trial court's preventive detention without the trial court first holding an evidentiary hearing, "[r]esolving the issue of whether RSA 597:2, III-IV require[ed] the trial court to hold an evidentiary bail hearing raise[ed] an issue of statutory interpretation. Accordingly, [this Court's] review is *de novo*."). "When examining the language of a statute, [this Court] ascribe[s] the plain and ordinary meaning to the words used." *Id.* at 434. This Court "interpret[s] legislative intent from the statute as written and will not consider what the legislature might have said or add language that the legislature did not see fit to include." *Id*.

II. THE DEFENDANT HAS NOT PROVIDED A COMPLETE RECORD UPON WHICH THIS COURT CAN ADDRESS THE DEFENDANT'S BAIL ARGUMENT

The defendant argues that this Court should "reverse the trial court's order and grant [the defendant] bail so he can treat his medical conditions." DB 18. This argument must fail because the defendant has not provided this Court with a complete record of the bail hearing he challenges.

The defendant, as the appealing party, is "responsible for ensuring that all or such portions of the record relevant and necessary for the court to decide the questions of law presented by the case are in fact provided to the supreme court. The supreme court may dismiss the case or decline to address specific questions raised on appeal for failure to comply with this requirement." Sup. Ct. R. 13(2). "If the moving party intends to argue in the supreme court that a finding or conclusion is unsupported by the evidence or is contrary to the evidence, the moving party shall include in the record a transcript of all evidence relevant to such finding or conclusion." Sup. Ct. R. 15(3). "[A]bsent a transcript of the hearing, [this Court] must assume that the evidence was sufficient to support the result reached by the trial court." *Bean v. Red Oak Prop. Mgmt.*, 151 N.H. 248, 250 (2004).

Here, the defendant has not provided this Court with a transcript of the August 26, 2022, bail hearing. As such, it is unknown if the superior court was presented with any information regarding the defendant's medical treatment and conditions prior to detaining the defendant. Because the defendant is challenging the superior court's discretion in denying the defendant's motion to amend bail partly on the grounds that his medical

condition and treatment were not considered by the trial court in detaining him, this Court cannot appropriately evaluate the superior court's decision without having this transcript to review. *See id.* ("It is the burden of the appealing party, here the [defendant] both to provide this court with a record sufficient to decide [his] issues on appeal, as well as to demonstrate that [he] raised [his] issues before the trial court.").

For the same reasons as noted above, this Court should not consider in this appeal any medical information provided in the defendant's brief or appendix that was not presented to the superior court for review. See State v. Batisa-Silva, 171 N.H. 818, 822 (2019) ("The defendant, as the appealing party, bears the burden of demonstrating that he specifically raised the arguments articulated in his appellate brief before the trial court."). Because this Court is tasked with reviewing the superior court's decision to deny the defendant's motion to amend bail for an unsustainable exercise of discretion, this Court cannot consider any information regarding the defendant's medical condition or treatment that was not presented to the superior court. The only pleading containing the defendant's medical information that was provided to both the superior court and this Court on appeal is the defendant's September 2, 2022 motion to amend bail. DA 2-11. As such, this Court should only review the defendant's medical information contained in that pleading in determining whether the superior court sustainably exercised its discretion.

III. THE SUPERIOR COURT CORRECTLY INTERPRETED RSA 597:2, III(a) IN DENYING THE DEFENDANT'S EMERGENCY MOTION TO AMEND BAIL ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS

The defendant argues that, because the first line of RSA 597:2, III(a) states that the court shall consider the safety of the public or the defendant in determining whether to release or detain him, the superior court "incorrectly limited the scope of RSA 597:2 when it failed to consider [the defendant's medical care at HCHOC] in denying [the defendant's] request for bail." DB 12. This argument fails because the superior court correctly interpreted RSA 597:2, III(a) in its September 6 and September 8 orders.

In pertinent part, RSA 597:2, III states that:

When considering whether to release or detain a person, the court shall consider the following issues: (a) Safety of the public or the defendant. If a person is charged with any criminal offense, an offense listed in RSA 173-B:1, I, or a violation of a protective order under RSA 458:16, III, or after arraignment, is charged with a violation of a protective order issued under RSA 173-B, the court may order preventive detention without bail, or, in the alternative, may order restrictive conditions including but not limited to electronic monitoring and supervision, only if the court determines by clear and convincing evidence that release will endanger the safety of that person or the public. In determining whether release will endanger the safety of that person or the public, the court may consider all relevant factors presented pursuant to paragraph IV.

RSA 597:2, III(a). A plain reading of this entire paragraph instructs that once a court determines that someone is a danger to himself or the public, it may order either preventive detention or other restrictive conditions that allow the defendant's release from incarceration. RSA 597:2, III(a). In

determining whether release is appropriate, however, the statute directs a court to determine whether the defendant's release will endanger the public or the defendant. RSA 597:2, III(a).

In other words, RSA 597:2, III(a) requires a court to make two determinations regarding preventive detention. First, a court must find that there is clear and convincing evidence that a defendant is a danger to himself or to the community. RSA 597:2, III(a). Second, a court must determine whether to preventively detain the defendant or whether he can be released with "restrictive conditions" aimed at protecting the defendant and the community from the danger the defendant poses. *Id.* In making this second determination, the statute allows a court to consider any factors it deems relevant to determining whether the defendant must be detained or whether he can be released with restrictions. *Id.*

Here, the superior court made these two determinations. Following an initial bail hearing, the superior court found; (1) that there was clear and convincing evidence that the defendant's release would endanger either the defendant's or the public's safety; and (2) that there were no restrictive conditions that would allow for the defendant's release that would also protect either the defendant or the public. DA 21.

In making this second determination, that there are no restrictive conditions upon which the defendant could be safely released, the superior court accurately interpreted the last sentence of RSA 597:2, III(a). As noted in the superior court's ruling on the defendant's motion to reconsider, the last sentence of RSA 597:2, III(a) allowing a court to determine whether release will endanger the defendant "is plainly intended to allow the Court to detain a defendant who is a danger to himself because he is suicidal or

has such a severe addiction such that there is clear and convincing evidence that release would result in self-harm." DB 23. Further, "[t]he statute does not contemplate consideration of whether incarceration will endanger the defendant's safety because the jail is obligated to provide proper medical treatment." DB 23.

Here, the superior court correctly concluded that it does not have to consider as a relevant factor the defendant's potential incarceration conditions when determining whether release will endanger the defendant or the public. The statutory phrase "[i]n determining whether release will endanger the safety of the person or the public" requires a court to consider only whether it is safe to release the defendant to the community, given that the court has already determined that there is clear and convincing evidence that he is a danger to himself or the public. In correctly interpreting the statute this way, the superior court sustainably exercised its discretion in denying the defendant's motion to amend bail.

Accordingly, this Court should affirm the superior court's denial of the defendant's emergency motion to amend bail.

IV. THE SUPERIOR COURT SUSTAINABLY DENIED THE DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO AMEND BAIL BECAUSE THE DEFENDANT'S MOTION REQUESTED RELIEF UNAVAILABLE TO HIM IN THE BAIL STATUTE

The superior court sustainably exercised its discretion in determining that RSA 597:2 does not provide a vehicle for the relief sought by the defendant. DB 21-23. Nothing in RSA 597:2 explicitly allows a court to amend a preventive detention order based solely on the conditions of the

defendant's incarceration. RSA 597:2 only provides vehicles for release of the defendant on conditions assuring his safety in the community or assuring his appearance at future court proceedings. RSA 597:2, III(a), (b).

The superior court correctly concluded that the vehicle for the relief the defendant seeks must come in the form of a civil pleading in which the HCHOC would be a party that is provided notice of the defendant's claims and an opportunity to directly respond to them. In a criminal case, a penal institution is not a party to the prosecution. Likewise, the prosecutor in a criminal case represents the state, not a government-run agency, such as the HCHOC.

Thus, requiring a prosecutor in a criminal case to represent the position and interests of both the State and the HCHOC is improper because these groups have different interests. The HCHOC is tasked with housing pretrial inmates and inmates sentenced to one year or less of incarceration. It has no stake in whether the defendant committed the crimes alleged by the State. Likewise, the HCHOC's treatment of an inmate has no bearing on whether there is proof beyond a reasonable doubt that the inmate committed the crimes charged. As such, any claim for relief based on a defendant's incarceration conditions must be addressed in a civil action separate from a criminal prosecution naming the HCHOC's warden as a party.

Here, the superior court sustainably exercised its discretion in denying the defendant's motion to amend bail on the procedural grounds that the defendant had not filed a civil action against the HCHOC. DA 21-23. Indeed, the superior court specifically noted that it "has not denied the defendant's request on its merits." DB 23. The superior court's denial of the

defendant's motion does not unreasonably prejudice the defendant's case. Rather, it directs him to file a civil action that would allow him to seek relief from the HCHOC, the entity responsible for providing him with adequate medical treatment while he is detained preventively during his criminal prosecution.

The defendant argues in his brief that, "to the extent that [the defendant] requested that the trial court grant him bail, a response from [HCHOC] is not required." DB 17. He further argues that "[t]he alleged violations of his constitutional rights simply give the trial court an additional avenue to grant [the defendant] bail." DB 17. While the State agrees that a house of corrections does not generally respond in a criminal prosecution to a defendant's motion to amend bail, the State does not agree that an alleged constitutional violation lodged against a house of corrections is merely an additional avenue by which to grant a defendant bail.

"An individual has a liberty interest, in the broadest sense, in the application of any rule affirmatively recognizing a claim of liberty or in limiting the exercise of a governmental power over the person." *Baker v. Cunningham*, 128 N.H. 374, 377 (1986). "Not every such liberty interest lends itself to judicial enforcement or vindication, however, and courts have derived three categories of such interests, the denial or infringement of which may be claimed by a criminal defendant as the basis for relief under a court's jurisdiction to issue writs of habeas corpus." *Id.* "Interests in the first two categories are either constitutional in origin or constitutionally protected; those in the third category are directly enforceable, at least in the courts of New Hampshire, as legal rights." *Id.*

"At the highest level are inherent or constitutional rights to be free." *Id.* "Below them are rights or expectations to preserve or obtain liberty or to limit the government's discretion to infringe it, which are created by the law of a given jurisdiction." *Id.* Examples of rights in this second category are the right to "retain freedom on parole or on probation," or the right to limit confinement conditions authorized by a court's sentence in a criminal case. *Id.*, at 378-79.

"The third level of liberty interests, cognizable in habeas proceeding in the courts of this State, are legal rights that have a bearing on official decisions to grant or withhold liberty, and which are directly enforceable under State law." *Id.* at 379. "An individual thus has a cognizable interest in the legality, as well as in the constitutionally required procedural sufficiency, of the State's action affecting his liberty." *Id.*

Here, to the extent that the defendant claims in his motion to amend bail that the HCHOC is violating his constitutional right to liberty by denying him adequate medical care, the appropriate vehicle by which to seek relief is a writ of habeas corpus. *See Knowles v. Warden, New Hampshire State Prison*, 140 N.H. 387, 389 (1995) (holding that a petition for a writ of habeas corpus must establish that an inmate's imprisonment is unlawful and must allege "a present deprivation of a protected liberty interest.") (quotations and citation omitted)). To the extent that the defendant claims he is entitled to release on bail because he is no longer a danger to the community or because there are restrictive conditions upon which he could be released, the appropriate vehicle for that relief is rooted in RSA 597:2.

Because the defendant's complaint in this case is with the HCHOC's treatment of him during his incarceration and not the superior court's decision to preventively detain him, it is imperative that the HCHOC receive notice of and the opportunity to respond to the defendant's claims. The mechanism by which to notify the HCHOC of his claims and allow it to respond is rooted in a civil action naming the HCHOC's warden as a party, not in RSA 597:2.

Accordingly, this Court should affirm the superior court's denial of the defendant's emergency motion to amend bail.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the State respectfully requests that this Honorable Court affirm the superior court's denial of the defendant's emergency motion to amend bail.

The State does not request oral argument. If one is scheduled, undersigned counsel will appear on behalf of the State.

Respectfully Submitted,

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

By Its Attorneys,

JOHN M. FORMELLA ATTORNEY GENERAL

ANTHONY J. GALDIERI SOLICITOR GENERAL

October 17, 2022

/s/ Audriana Mekula

Audriana Mekula, Bar No. 270164

Attorney

Criminal Justice Bureau

New Hampshire Department of Justice

33 Capitol Street

Concord, NH 03301-6397

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I, Audriana Mekula, hereby certify that pursuant to Rule 16(4)(b) of the New Hampshire Supreme Court Rules, this brief contains approximately 3,816 words, which is fewer than the words permitted by this Court's rules. Counsel relied upon the word count of the computer program used to prepare this brief.

October 17, 2022

/s/ Audriana Mekula Audriana Mekula

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Audriana Mekula, hereby certify that a copy of the State's brief shall be served on, Cassandra Moran, Esq., counsel for the defendant, through the New Hampshire Supreme Court's electronic filing system.

October 17, 2022

/s/ Audriana Mekula Audriana Mekula

ADDENDUM

State's Addendum Table of Contents

Strangulation charge, filed August 26, 2022	21
Stalking charge, filed August 26, 2022	22

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The State of New Hampshire SUPERIOR COURT COMPLAINT

	Case Number: 216-2022-CR-01764 Agency Number: 22-272-AR						
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VIOLATION	FELONY	☐ CLASS A	X CLASS B	☐ SPECIAL	☐ UNCLAS	SIFIED (non person)	
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AT: Peterborough on or about the 24th day of August 2022 in the above county and state, did commit the offense of: Second Degree Assault RSA Name: 2nd Degree Assault; Dom Violence; Strangle Contrary to RSA: RSA Ch. 631:2,I(f) Inchoate: : (Sentence Enhancer): N/A Penalty: 3 ½ to 7 years; \$4000 And the laws of New Hampshire for which the defendant should be held to answer, in that:							
Daniel Laguerre knowingly engaged in the strangulation of A.B.(dob-07/14/1979), an intimate partner as defined by RSA 631:2-b, III, by getting on top of A.B. and placing both hands around her neck, applying pressure sufficient to cause A.B. to experience impeded breathing,							
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/s/ Carl D. (Carl D. Olson, N Hillsborough Co	NH Bar ID No		Plea of No Entered A	08/26/ ot Guilty ugust 26, 2			

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The State of New Hampshire SUPERIOR COURT COMPLAINT

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☐ COMM. VEH	l.	☐ COMM. DR. LIC	C. □ HAZ. MA	ΛT. □ 16+	☐ 16+ PASSENGER		
AT: Peterborough on or about the 24th day of August 2022 in the above county and state, did commit the offense of: Stalking RSA Name: Stalking - Notice of Order Contrary to RSA: RSA Ch. 633:3-a,l(c) Inchoate:: (Sentence Enhancer): N/A Penalty: 12 months; \$2000 And the laws of New Hampshire for which the defendant should be held to answer, in that:							
Daniel Laguerre knowingly violated a Criminal Order of Protection, issued pursuant to RSA 597:2 issued by the bail commissioner on August 7, 2022, that prohibits contact with A.B.(dob-07/14/1979), when Laguerre knowingly engaged in a single act of conduct that both violated the protective order and threatened the safety of A.B.,							
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/s/ Carl D. (08/2	<u> 26/2022</u>			
Carl D. Olson, N Hillsborough Co			Plea of Not Guilty Entered August 2				