



## DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 10, 2022

Hon. Ned Gordon, Chair  
and Members of the House Judiciary Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 208  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Via email only

**Re: CACR 18 (“Relating to Reproductive Medical Decisions”)**

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

As Director of the Office of Public Policy for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, and on behalf of Bishop Peter Libasci, I write to respectfully urge that you vote **ITL on CACR 18**.

I know I do not need to restate the views of the Catholic Church on abortion. The Catholic Church and legions of others who approach this issue from religious and secular perspectives alike believe in the inherent dignity of every human being, at every stage of life. This is why we supported for instance the abolition of the death penalty in New Hampshire, and it is why we oppose measures like this CACR that would deny the smallest of our sisters and brothers, who have not yet been born, their right to life.

It should be recognized just how far this amendment would go. The CACR would prevent the state from passing or enforcing laws that would restrict (or even “inconvenience”) abortion at any point during a pregnancy. In giving state sanction to abortions of unborn children who have reached the stage of viability, the CACR would venture even further than the Supreme Court did in *Roe v. Wade* (a decision which, it should be remembered, affirmed the right of the state to regulate or ban third-trimester abortions.) Indeed, as a measure of just how extreme the position that is staked out here, this CACR would even be contrary to the position held by those New Hampshire citizens who *support* the availability of abortion in the earlier stages of a pregnancy but who do not want abortion to be lawful when a child has reached the stage of viability.

The CACR as proposed would also give the State’s blessing, for instance, to abortions done for purposes of sex-selection or because the unborn child is presumed to have a disability. Given that there are those who oppose legal protections for born-alive survivors of abortion, it would require no stretch of the imagination to see an attempt to deploy this amendment even in a case where a child actually has been born.

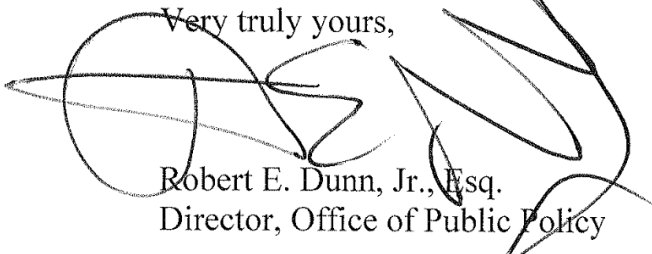
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What the legislature decides to do on an amendment like this logically will have a resonance in other areas. Pope Francis, in his 2015 encyclical letter on the environment, wrote this: “Since everything is interrelated, concern for the protection of nature is also incompatible with the justification of abortion...If personal and social sensitivity towards the acceptance of the new life is lost, then other forms of acceptance that are valuable for society also wither away.” Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si*, 120.

This only stands to reason. If we want our society to respect and value the child who is a refugee, the child who is homeless, or the child who does not have access to health care, then we need to respect and value the child in the womb as well.

Accordingly, I ask the Committee to recommend that the House vote down this proposed amendment.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,  
  
Robert E. Dunn, Jr., Esq.  
Director, Office of Public Policy