



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
Secretariat for Administration

February 7, 2017

The Honorable Frank Kotowski, Chair
House Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee
107 North Main Street – Room 205
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 471 (Relative to Induced Termination of Pregnancy Statistics)

Dear Representative Kotowski and Members of the Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee:

As Director of the Office of Public Policy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, and on behalf of Bishop Peter Libasci, I write to **support HB 471**.

Currently, the State of New Hampshire is one of only two states in the country that does not collect statistics about abortions. This information could be helpful not only in creating and targeting programs to help women who have had abortions, but also in supporting healthy mothers and babies and reducing unintended teen pregnancies. Indeed, when a bill to collect abortion statistics was brought before your committee in 2015, the Department of Health and Human Services supported the bill, testifying that it requires better information in order to further its goals of supporting healthy moms and babies and of reducing the number of unintended births. Moreover, although New Hampshire reportedly has the lowest teen pregnancy rate in the country, because we do not collect and report abortion statistics, we do not know if that rate includes teens who have become pregnant and had an abortion. We therefore do not have accurate information on which to determine the necessity for better education and programs designed to prevent teen pregnancies.

We commend the diligent efforts of a bipartisan group of this Committee that worked over the past several years to address concerns raised about the privacy of the information that would be reported under this bill. We urge you to **recommend HB 471 as ought to pass**. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony and your service to the people of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

Meredith P. Cook, Esq.
Director, Office of Public Policy