



## DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 8, 2021

Via email only

The Hon. Ned Gordon, Chair  
And Members of the House Judiciary Committee  
Legislative Office Building  
Concord, NH 03301

**Re: HB 625 (Prohibiting Abortions at or after 24 Weeks)**

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

As the Director of the Office of Public Policy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, and on behalf of Bishop Peter Libasci, I write in strong **support of HB 625**, which prohibits abortions at or after 24 weeks.

It goes without saying that abortion is probably the issue that most sharply divides the body politic in this country today. As has been said, some look at the images of a child in the womb and see one of us. Others look at those same images and do not see one of us. Or they see one of us and yet believe that there are reasons why the law should allow the taking of that life.

Over the years, this Diocese has actively advocated on many public issues where the fundamental principles of life and human dignity were at stake. We have for instance opposed the death penalty, supported stronger protections for victims of human trafficking, and taken positions on behalf of immigrants. We support this bill for exactly the same reasons.

It is important to think about abortion-related bills in the context of the way we want society to treat those who are in any way voiceless. As Pope Francis put it in *Laudato Si*, his 2015 encyclical letter on the environment (or, as he subtitled it “Care for our Common Home”):

*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.’ (Laudato Si, 120).*

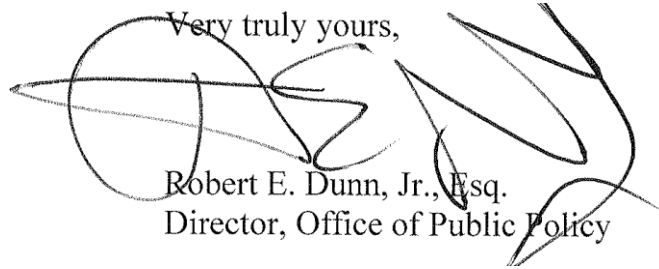
As you think about this bill, I ask that you consider how the issue of abortion has resonance in other areas. If we want our society to respect and value the child who is a refugee, or the child who is homeless, or the child who does not have access to health care, then we need to respect and value the child in the womb as well. If society decides that certain ones of us can be treated as expendable, we should not be surprised if society treats certain ones of us as expendable.

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Therefore, I ask that you vote ought to pass on HB 625.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. E. Dunn, Jr.', is written over the typed name and title. The signature is stylized and somewhat illegible due to overlapping loops and lines.

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