



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 18, 2022

Via email only

Senator Sharon Carson, Chair
And Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
State House
Concord, NH 03301

Re: SB 436 (Creating a Statutory Right to Abortion)

Dear Senator Carson 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 to respectfully register our opposition to SB 436, which would create a statutory right of “access to abortion care.”

The bill seeks to create an affirmative public policy that declares abortion “vital to the equality and liberty of all individuals.” It probably goes without saying that we could not disagree more strongly with this statement.

I suspect that most people in New Hampshire, regardless of political or religious persuasion, share a concern that the fundamental principles of human dignity and solidarity are beset by many challenges today. But the work of building dignity and solidarity certainly will not be advanced by the passage of a law that would affirmatively declare certain human beings to be disposable. I ask the Committee to consider these important words of Pope Francis:

[The] defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems. Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be.

Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *The Joy of the Gospel*, 213 (2013).

It should also be noted just what this bill encompasses. SB 436 would allow all abortions except for those enumerated in the bill; namely, abortions prohibited under the Fetal Life Protection Act (RSA 329:44 *ff.*) and those which do not comply with the parental notification law (RSA 132:34 *ff.*). The bill therefore would provide affirmative state sanction to all other abortions. This would include, for instance, abortions done for purposes of sex-selection or because the unborn child is presumed to have a disability. Additionally, because it is not mentioned in SB 436 as one of the

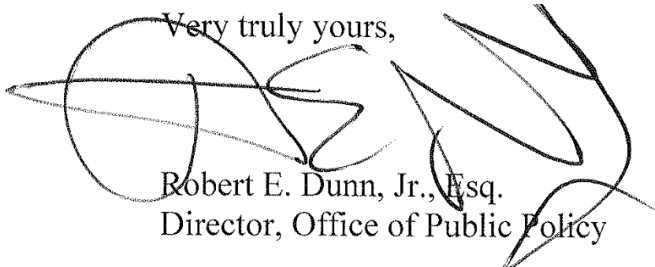
Senator Sharon Carson, Chair
And Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
January 18, 2022
Page 2

exceptions, the bill would appear to render unenforceable the ban on partial birth abortions (RSA 329:32 *ff.*).

I respectfully ask that you vote ITL on SB 436.

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 the cursive nature of the handwriting.

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