

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 18, 2020

The Hon. Jeff Goley, Chair
and Members of the House Executive Departments Committee
Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 1228 (Climate Change Awareness Day)

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

As Director of Public Policy for the Diocese of Manchester, and on behalf of Bishop Peter Libasci, I want to register **our support for HB 1228**, which would designate October 1 each year as Climate Change Awareness Day.

In 2015, Pope Francis issued what is known in the Catholic Church as an Encyclical Letter, one of the primary ways that a Pope exercises his teaching office within the Church. The 2015 Encyclical, entitled *Laudato Si*, concerned what the letter calls “care for our common home.” In that letter, Pope Francis called climate “a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.” *Laudato Si*, 23. The Pope highlighted the implications of that fundamental principle. “Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political, and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day.” *Id.*, 26.

Pope Francis asked us not to lose our sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women. He noted that the worst impacts of climate change have been and will be felt by the poor who live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming and whose means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. *Id.* Interestingly, Pope Francis also refers in his letter to St. Therese of Lisieux – whose feast day the Catholic Church celebrates on October 1st - and urges us to imitate her practice of “the little way of love”, which does not fail to offer even the smallest gesture that “sows peace and friendship,” because “an integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness.” *Id.*, 230. “In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms.” *Id.*

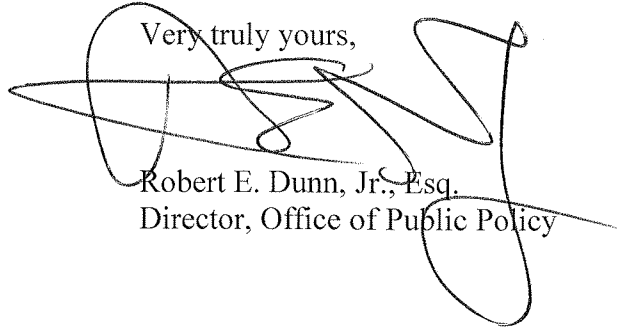
An annual day such as what HB 1228 would establish will serve as a catalyst to keep this important issue in the public eye, and it will be a useful focal point which educators and civic leaders can use in order to help our citizens learn more about the critical impacts of climate

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change. Thus, we believe that HB 1228 will promote the common good, and therefore we ask you to recommend OTP on the bill.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned over the typed name and title.

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