



DIocese OF MANCHESTER  
*Secretariat for Administration*

January 22, 2013

The Honorable Andrew White  
House Labor, Industrial and Rehabilitative Services Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 307  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**Re: HB 249 (Requiring Employers to Verify an Employee's Eligibility to Work in the United States)**

Dear Representative White:

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 express our **opposition to HB 249**. This bill requires public employers as well as their contractors and subcontractors to participate in an electronic verification of work authorization program known as E-Verify, or its equivalent.

Flaws in the E-Verify system are significant. Errors generated by the E-Verify program result in the denial of employment opportunities to citizens and others who are **legally authorized** to work in this country. Many of the errors are due to problems of data entry. According to reports from the federal Government Accountability Office, these errors are more likely to occur for individuals with ethnic surnames, particularly those of Hispanic and Arab origin and for those who have married and/or divorced. According to a statement from the Government Accountability Office citing the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, "of 22,512 TNCs [Temporary Non-Confirmation of employment eligibility] resulting from name mismatches in fiscal year 2009, approximately 76 percent, or 17,098, were for citizens." And although this law seeks to verify employee eligibility to work in the United States, due to well-documented flaws in the Government databases upon which it relies, E-Verify does not detect approximately half of the undocumented workers entered into the system. Our concern is that these error rates will increase if E-Verify is made mandatory.

Unless E-Verify's expansion is undertaken in the context of comprehensive immigration reform, it will hurt U.S. workers and our already weakened economy. Mandating E-Verify pushes more workers into the underground, off-the-books, cash-based economy. This provides the state with less tax revenue, gives unscrupulous employers more tools to coerce workers, and puts basic human rights at risk.

We need to fix our broken immigration system, not make it worse by mandating an enforcement-only program that fails to meet its stated goal of verifying employee eligibility to work in the United States and instead hurts workers and over-burdens the State.



The solution is to work together on the federal level to reform our immigration system by creating a path to legal status for unauthorized immigrants to strengthen our economy and preserve U.S. jobs. We urge you to report HB 249 as inexpedient to legislate. Thank you for your dedicated service to the people of the State of New Hampshire.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Meredith Cook".

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

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