



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 24, 2023

Hon. Thomas Walsh, Chair
and Members of the House Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 375 (relative to the licensure of nonresident aliens temporarily residing in New Hampshire)

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 to respectfully register our support for HB 375. Allowing people who have filed a complete application for asylum status through United States Citizenship and Immigration Services will advance human dignity and the common good in several ways.

First, this bill would provide realistic access to businesses and resources that are outside the immediate vicinity of where these applicants live. As all of us are well aware, the lack of public transportation in many parts of New Hampshire can make a driver's license almost essential to have. HB 375 would enable applicants to more practically be able to go shopping, see a doctor, and assist their family members.

Second, allowing these applicants to get temporary drivers' licenses would benefit the public safety. People who are able to obtain a license will have the incentive to get a license instead of driving without one. This means that the applicants necessarily will have to acquire the requisite practical and written knowledge and skills that will allow them to pass the licensure tests.

Third, the possession of a driver's license will make it easier for a law enforcement officer to identify the license holder. In the absence of a license, officers would need to turn to other types of documents which might not be readily available, or which might not be easily translatable into English. For the same reason, in the event of a medical emergency, a license makes it easier for a first responder to know who the person is.

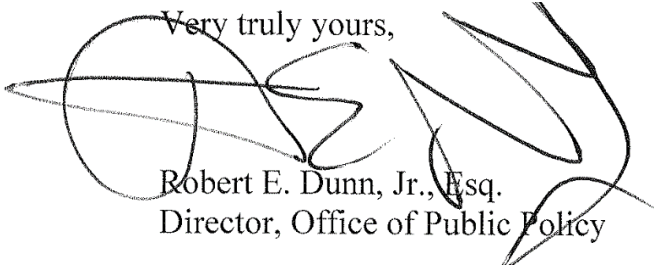
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At the same time, it seems that HB 375 carries with it little risk. The licenses issued under the bill would be valid only for 180 days, and both the limited time frame and the high improbability that asylum seekers thinking of coming to New Hampshire will research our motor vehicle laws combine to make it all but certain that the bill will affect exactly who it is aimed at: people living in New Hampshire who are awaiting the resolution of their duly-filed application for asylum status.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that you vote ought to pass on HB 375.

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 fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

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