



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
Secretariat for Administration

February 7, 2013

The Honorable Mary Gile
House Education Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 207
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 474 (Relative to Eligibility for In-State Tuition Rates at the University System of New Hampshire)

Dear Representative Gile and Members of the Education Committee:

As the Director of the Office 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 support for **HB 474**, a measure intended to make New Hampshire law consistent with recent changes in federal policy allowing limited benefits for immigrants who arrived in the United States as children.

Current New Hampshire law requires students admitted to the university system after December 31, 2012 and receiving the in-state rate of tuition to execute an affidavit stating they are legal residents of the United States. In June 2012, the federal government announced a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program for eligible applicants who arrived in the United States before age 16 and meet other criteria. HB 474 modifies the New Hampshire affidavit requirement to allow students who currently do not have lawful immigration status to claim in-state tuition status by stating they have filed an application to legalize their status or will file such an application as soon as they are eligible.

The concern of the Roman Catholic Church for immigrants flows from its profound respect for human rights, families, and the dignity of the human person. This bill will assist the children of immigrants who were brought to the United States by their parents and work hard in school with the hope of going to college but then discover they face tremendous obstacles. This bill does not provide them with free tuition but instead provides a discounted rate. Even those who are eligible for in-state tuition almost always have to work at full-time jobs throughout their college careers to afford a degree.



This effort to modify New Hampshire's existing law is sound public policy, and we urge you to report **HB 474** as ought to pass. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony and your service to the people 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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