



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 7, 2023

Senator James Gray, Chair
And Members of the Senate Election Law Committee
Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: **SB 132 (Sanctuary Policies)**

Dear Senator Gray 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 132.**

From the time when I was the Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Safety in the early 1990s and down to the present, it has been clear that the Department of Safety and the NH Chiefs of Police Association have always been very much at ease when they want to bring ideas to the legislature about ways to protect the people of New Hampshire. The fact that this proposal has not been initiated by those law enforcement organizations is a significant point to consider here.

I understand from those who work with immigrant communities in New Hampshire that many immigrants come from countries where there is a significant mistrust of the police and the government. As a result, New Hampshire law enforcement authorities have a difficult task in assuring these communities that our police departments exist to serve and protect everyone. I am aware that police departments in many cities and towns in New Hampshire have made significant efforts to establish trust and to open lines of communication with immigrant communities. These lines of communication are critical to the public safety. If people are afraid of going to the police to report crimes, then criminals will be more easily able to prey on people who are already vulnerable enough.

Thus, the question of how state and local police deal with ICE detainers is something that should be left to the judgment of those departments, and not dictated by the State in a way that does not account for local situations. If New Hampshire law enforcement



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

authorities decide to use their discretion with respect to enforcement of ICE detainers, then the State should defer to their expertise as to how best to protect the public safety in the communities under their jurisdiction.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that you recommend SB 132 as inexpedient to legislate.

Thank you as always for your kind consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. E. Dunn, Jr.", written over the typed name and title.

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