



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

April 20, 2022

Via email only

Sen. Bob Giuda, Chair
And Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee
State House
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 1598 (Legalization of Marijuana)

Dear Senator Giuda 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 HB 1598**.

Over the years, the Diocese of Manchester has consistently opposed proposals to legalize the so-called recreational use of marijuana. We have done this because in our view the common good would be harmed by the passage of this type of legislation.

The principle of the common good is not just a religious concept, of course; as you know, Part 1 Article 3 of the New Hampshire Constitution expressly recognizes that “the protection of others” is a foundational purpose of society. I hope that you will look at this legislation in the light of that principle.

Our state continues to struggle with a substance misuse crisis that has cost the lives of thousands of people and devastated the lives and health of countless more of our neighbors. Catholic ministries around the state are seeing the effects of this first-hand. With that perspective in mind, we urge you not to pass a bill that would legalize yet another drug that potentially harms those who are most in need of our protection and that would be the cause of unnecessary financial costs to the State of New Hampshire, local governments, and New Hampshire families.

As you review this legislation, we respectfully ask you to consider the following essential questions:

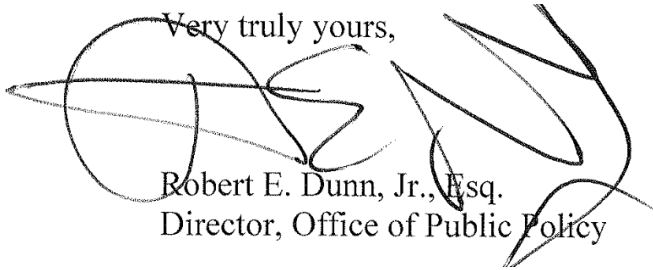
- 1. Will the passage of this law protect our youth and improve family life?**
- 2. Will the passage of this law improve the public health?**
- 3. Will the passage of this law improve communities?**
- 4. Will the passage of this law make people better workers and strengthen our business workforce?**

Sen. Bob Giuda, Chair
And Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee
April 20, 2022
Page 2

In our view, the answer to all these questions is decidedly “no”. Therefore, we think that any revenues that might come to the State from the enactment of this sort of legislation are sure to be outweighed by the financial costs -and even more, the social costs – of the measure. Accordingly, we respectfully ask you to protect the common good by voting to recommend ITL on HB 1598.

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 initial 'R' and 'D'.

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