



**DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER**  
*Secretariat for Administration and Community Affairs*

February 17, 2011

Honorable Robert Rowe, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Room 208 - Legislative Office Building  
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 437 (Repeal Of Same Sex Marriage)

Dear Representative Rowe and Members of the Committee:

As Chancellor of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, and on behalf of Bishop John B. McCormack, I want to register our strong support for HB 437, which would repeal same sex marriage in New Hampshire. As you are well aware, we have consistently opposed the same sex marriage initiatives, including the legislation in 2009 which led to the creation of same sex marriage in this state. It is our belief that the law is inconsistent with what thousands of years of human civilization show us, and that marriage is not something which can be entered into by two persons of the same gender.

The starting point for any discussion about the Catholic Church's position on same sex marriage is that every person is of incomparable worth and has intrinsic dignity—a dignity that can never be taken away. The Church believes that affirming the meaning of marriage as a union between a man and a woman affirms the meaning and dignity of the human person, created as male and female. One man and one woman are essential to marriage because of their differences—the difference is the difference, and true union is only possible in and through their difference. Marriage is a unique bond of husband and wife fundamentally open to the possibility of new life and is the context for mothering and fathering, both of which are indispensable.

Marriage is not merely a private institution or a personal commitment between two people who love one another. It is the foundation of the family, which has been, and must continue to be, the bedrock of every human society. There is no other relationship which symbolizes life and love as marriage between a man and a woman does. Justice requires that marriage as the union of one man and one woman be restored and protected.

The 2009 legislation, by the narrowest of margins, overturned thousands of years of Western civilization, and affected the fundamentally building block of our society. The law was wrong when it was passed in 2009, and it continues to be wrong. We urge the legislature this year to correct the fundamental error which occurred in 2009, and we urge the legislature to pass HB 437.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your service to the people of the State of New Hampshire.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Diane Murphy Quinlan  
Chancellor