

Catholic Citizenship News Archive 2013

Catholic Citizenship News is the e-mail newsletter from the Diocese of Manchester Office of Public Policy. To learn more about CCN or to subscribe visit www.catholicnh.org/ccn

A Call for Just and Compassionate Immigration Reform

Jan 7, 2013

Ask your United States Senators and Representatives to pass just and compassionate immigration reform legislation in the 113th Congress. [CLICK HERE](#) to send this electronic postcard today.

	 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops <i>we are one family under God</i>
<p>Dear Senator/Representative:</p> <p>I agree with the U.S. Catholic bishops that now is the time to pass just and compassionate immigration reform. I ask that in the 113th Congress you support immigration reform that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a path to citizenship for undocumented persons in the country;• Preserves family unity as a corner-stone of our national immigration system;• Provides legal paths for low-skilled immigrant workers to come and work in the United States;• Restores due process protections to our immigration enforcement policies;• Addresses the root causes (push factors) of migration, such as persecution and economic disparity. <p>I look forward to monitoring your public position on this vital issue to our nation. Our nation can no longer wait.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>_____</p>	

Contact Your State Representative to Support the Education Tax Credit Program

Feb 8, 2013



Background

A New Hampshire law allows businesses to make a donation to a scholarship organization in exchange for a tax credit against the state business profits tax and/or business enterprise tax for an amount equal to 85% of the donation. The donations are used by the scholarship organization to grant scholarships to New Hampshire children to attend nonpublic schools, including Catholic schools. Children age 5 to 20 who have not graduated from high school are eligible to apply if their household income does not exceed 300% of the federal poverty level (currently \$69,150 for a family of four). A bill has been introduced to repeal the education tax program, and the House Ways & Means Committee is expected to consider the bill next week.

Take Action

Contact your legislator to oppose [HB 370](#), a bill repealing the education tax credit program.

[CLICK HERE](#) to find your Representative.

On Tuesday, February 12, the House Ways & Means Committee will hold an Executive Session to consider HB 370 before the bill goes to the full House for a vote. [CLICK HERE](#) for a list of the members of the Ways & Means Committee.

Talking Points:

- While the wealthy in New Hampshire can choose among many successful and even elite options to find the best fit for their children, low- and middle-income families do not have the same

opportunities. This program, restricted to students from households where income is less than 300% of the federal poverty level, gives families the chance to choose the educational setting that best meets the needs of their children.

- Some have expressed concern this program will have a negative impact on the state budget, but according to the New Hampshire Department of Education, the program would minimally impact public schools spending, and in fact save money in the short-term.
- To advocate for repeal of the education tax credit program by arguing the program decreases funding to public schools is misleading. Any loss in state aid to public school districts as a result of students leaving to attend nonpublic schools would be much less than the cost to educate students in the public school – and parents will continue to pay property taxes for students who no longer attend public schools. New Hampshire should strive to create the best learning environments for our children in all available settings, including both public and nonpublic schools.
- Parents should have the opportunity to determine the educational setting that best meets the needs of their children, whether that setting is a public school, a nonpublic school, or a homeschool environment. School choice empowers families to find the best educational environment for each student.

NH House Considering End-of-Life Issues

Feb 12, 2013

NH House Considering End-of-Life Issues

The New Hampshire House will consider two bills on end-of-life issues in the next few weeks:

- HB 403 (Establishing a Commission to Study Death with Dignity for Persons Suffering from a Terminal Condition)
- HB 316 (Relative to Regulating Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)

HB 403 (“Death with Dignity” Study)

Background:

The New Hampshire House is considering [HB 403](#), a bill to study “death with dignity,” also known as physician-assisted suicide. The original bill created a commission with input from representatives such as the New Hampshire Medical Society. The Judiciary Committee voted to modify the study to a committee comprised entirely of legislators. The House is expected to vote on the amended version of HB 403 in the coming weeks.

How to Take Action:

Contact your House representatives soon and ask them to oppose HB 403. To find your representative, [CLICK HERE](#).

Talking Points:

- Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less.
- Some have argued this bill merely studies physician-assisted suicide, and there is no harm in studying an issue. Passing this bill would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, however, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent.
- People who request physician-assisted suicide are vulnerable. They need care and protection. Some claim physician-assisted suicide offers freedom, but it instead is a serious risk of neglect. This abandonment is especially irresponsible when society increasingly is aware of elder abuse, our limited resources for those with mental illnesses, and other forms of mistreatment and exploitation of vulnerable persons.
- Even when a cure is not possible, medicine plays a critical role in providing palliative care – alleviating pain and other symptoms and meeting basic needs. Such care can provide a better way – combining medical skill with attention to the emotional as well as spiritual needs of those facing the end of life.
- We urge the New Hampshire House to oppose HB 403 because we, as a society, can respond to New Hampshire citizens at the end of life with care and compassion, not with death as the solution.

HB 316 (Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)

Background:

HB 316 would allow and regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash is returned to the decedent's family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. A hearing on HB 316 was held on February 7, and the Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee will vote on the bill before it is sent to the House for consideration.

How to Take Action:

[Contact members of the Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee](#) and your representative ask them to oppose HB 316.

Talking Points:

- Reverence and respect for human remains are important principles which have been reflected in society down through the ages.

- These principles are reflected in the system of New Hampshire state laws which govern how human remains are to be treated.
 - The process of alkaline hydrolysis is prohibited in New Hampshire under current state law and should continue to be banned because it fails to provide New Hampshire citizens with the reverence and respect they should receive at the end of their lives.
-

New Hampshire Legislature in Session

Feb 15, 2013

The New Hampshire Legislature has been busy conducting hearings on the many bills under consideration for this session. Here is a summary of the bills we have been following:

- [Abortion](#)
- [Education](#)
- [End-of-Life Issues](#)
- [Immigration](#)
- [Prisons](#)
- [Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#)
- [Title Loans](#)
- [How to Contact Your Representative](#)

Abortion

[HB 483](#) would require a physician who performs an abortion, or the referring physician, to provide a pregnant woman with certain information at least 24 hours prior to the abortion and to obtain her consent she received the information. The information to be provided includes the medical risks associated with the proposed abortion method. [The Judiciary Committee](#) held a hearing yesterday and will consider the bill before it is sent to the House. Read our testimony on [HB 483](#) and [contact your representative to support HB 483](#) as a step toward informing women of the risks and available options before an abortion is performed.

[HR 6](#) is a resolution “commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision and affirming support for its holding and principles.” The language of this resolution claims to speak on behalf of the State as a whole in supporting the Roe v. Wade decision and includes other remarks offensive to the dignity of human life and the closely-held beliefs of many of the citizens of New Hampshire. The [Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee](#) held a hearing yesterday and will consider the resolution before the House votes on the measure. [Read Bishop Libasci’s letter to the Committee](#) and [contact your representative to oppose HR 6](#).

Education

The New Hampshire education tax credit program is at risk of repeal, and your advocacy can make a difference to maintain this program. The law allows businesses to make a donation to a scholarship organization in exchange for a tax credit against the state business profits tax and/or business enterprise tax for an amount equal to 85% of the donation. The donations are used by the scholarship organization to grant scholarships to New Hampshire children to attend nonpublic schools, including Catholic schools. Children age 5 through 20 who have not graduated from high school are eligible to apply if they meet certain income requirements. HB 370 seeks to repeal this program that gives families the opportunity to determine the educational setting that best meets the needs of each student. [View our Catholic Citizenship News alert on HB 370 for more information and talking points.](#)

The House is expected to vote on this bill on Wednesday, February 20, so [contact your Representative today to oppose HB 370.](#)

End-of-Life Issues

[HB 316](#) would allow and regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash is returned to the decedent's family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. The Diocese of Manchester has opposed alkaline hydrolysis because every human person has an innate dignity that calls for the remains of every deceased person to be treated with the utmost respect. A hearing on HB 316 was held on February 7, and the [Health, Human Services & Elderly Affairs Committee](#) will vote on the bill before it is sent to the House for consideration. [Read our testimony on HB 316](#) and [contact your representative to oppose HB 316](#).

The New Hampshire House is considering [HB 403](#), a bill to study "death with dignity," also known as physician-assisted suicide. Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less. Some have argued this bill merely studies physician-assisted suicide, and there is no harm in studying an issue. Passing this bill would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, however, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent. The House is expected to vote on this bill on **Wednesday, February 20, so [contact your representative soon to oppose HB 403.](#)** [For more information, visit the Archdiocese of Boston's website](#) on Church teaching on dignity at the end of life.

Immigration

Last year, New Hampshire passed a law requiring 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 do not currently 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. This bill will assist the children of immigrants who were brought to the United States by their parents and work hard in high school with the hope of going to college. It does not provide free tuition but instead provides the discounted in-state rate. A hearing on HB 474 was held on February 7, and the [Education Committee](#) will

vote on the bill before it is sent to the House for consideration. [Read our testimony on HB 474](#) and [contact your representative to support this bill](#).

Prisons

The bishops of the United States have questioned whether private, for-profit corporations effectively can operate prisons because “[t]he profit motive may lead to reduced efforts to change behaviors, treat substance abuse, and offer skills necessary for reintegration into the community.” Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice, November 2000. A [January 2012 report](#) evaluated the claimed savings and potential risks to prisoners and staff and concluded “it is not in the best economic or public safety interests of New Hampshire to privatize its correctional system.” In light of the threats posed to the human dignity of prisoners and staff, we urge the State of New Hampshire to exercise caution before privatizing its prisons and support [HB 443](#), a bill intended to block full-scale privatization of state prisons. A hearing was held on HB 443 on February 7, and the [Criminal Justice & Public Safety Committee](#) will vote on the bill before it is sent to the House for consideration.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

[HB 121](#) requires the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to implement a drug testing program for applicants of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Under this proposed plan, applicants will bear the cost of a drug test at a time when their families need help making ends meet. Families should not be forced to decide between paying for a drug test or basic necessities such as food and utilities because of a persistent myth that people who receive welfare engage in drug use at a higher percentage than people in the general population. We support safeguarding children and discouraging inappropriate and morally destructive behavior, but applying this policy across the board to all applicants at an additional expense and without reason of suspicion is unjust. The House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee voted overwhelmingly yesterday to report the bill as inexpedient to legislate, and the House is expected to vote in the next few weeks. [Contact your representative to oppose HB 121](#).

Title Loans

New Hampshire law allows lenders to issue loans secured by a borrower’s car title at excessive rates of interest. [HB 562](#) caps the interest rate for this loan product at 36%, a rate consistent with the law in other states. These high-interest loans have a significant impact on low-wage earners and the poor. A hearing before the [Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee](#) has been scheduled for February 28. [Contact your representative to support HB 562](#).

How to Contact Your Representative

To find your representative and his or her contact information, [CLICK HERE](#).

HHS Proposal Falls Short in Meeting Church Concerns

Feb 22, 2013

Urge Congress to Protect Rights of Conscience and Religious Liberty

On February 1, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking related to the mandate that requires coverage for sterilization and contraception, including drugs that may cause abortions. The announcement showed some movement by the Administration but fell short of addressing concerns raised by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Cardinal Timothy Dolan expressed concern over the narrow understanding of a religious ministry. “The Administration’s proposal maintains its inaccurate distinction among religious ministries. It appears to offer second-class status to our first-class institutions in Catholic health care, Catholic education, and Catholic charities. HHS offers what it calls an “accommodation,” rather than accepting the fact that these ministries are integral to our Church and worthy of the same exemption as our Catholic churches.”

Cardinal Dolan also listed two other key problems: compelling church ministries to fund and facilitate services such as contraceptives, including abortion-inducing drugs and sterilization that violate Catholic teaching; and disregard of the conscience rights of for-profit business owners. All of these concerns were raised by the USCCB Administrative Committee in its March 2012 statement, *United for Religious Freedom*.

For more information, [read the release and statement from the USCCB](#).

Take Action Now

- Be Part of the Project Life and Liberty Postcard Campaign. The USCCB, together with the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment (NCHLA), launched a nationwide postcard campaign to urge members of Congress to support and strengthen laws that prevent federal funding and promotion of abortion and protect rights of conscience in health care. If you have not received a postcard, [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more, and contact Meredith Cook (mcook@rcbm.org or 603-663-0148) to receive a postcard.
- Send an e-mail through [NCHLA's Grassroots Action Center](#)
- Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 or call your Members' local offices:
 - [Senator Kelly Ayotte](#)
 - [Senator Jeanne Shaheen](#)
 - [Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster](#)

- [Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter](#)

Suggested Message:

“Please support legislation to protect the rights of conscience in health care when you take up ‘must-pass’ bills to fund the federal government. Government must not force Americans to violate their religious and moral beliefs on respect for life when they provide health care or sponsor or purchase health coverage. The Administration’s contraceptive mandate forces health coverage to include sterilization and contraceptives, including drugs that can cause an abortion, even when employers and employees have moral or religious objections.”

When:

Congress is beginning to consider “must-pass” appropriations legislation. Please contact your Representative and two Senators today.

Contact Your Representatives about Two Bills

The New Hampshire House will consider two bills next week:

- [HB 316](#) (Relative to Regulating Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)
- [HB 483](#) (Relative to Information Regarding Abortion)

HB 316 (Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)

Background:

[HB 316](#) would allow and regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash is returned to the decedent’s family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. A manufacturer of an alkaline hydrolysis vessel stated last year that the process releases a total of about 300 gallons of discharge.

How to Take Action:

[Contact your representative](#) today to oppose HB 316.

Talking Points:

- Reverence and respect for human remains are important principles which have been reflected in society down through the ages.

- These principles are reflected in the system of New Hampshire state laws which govern how human remains are to be treated.
- The process of alkaline hydrolysis is prohibited in New Hampshire under current state law and should continue to be banned because it fails to provide New Hampshire citizens with the reverence and respect they should receive at the end of their lives.

HB 483 (Relative to Information Regarding Abortion)

Mar 1, 2013

Background:

[HB 483](#) requires the physician performing an abortion, or the referring physician, to provide a pregnant woman with certain information at least 24 hours prior to the abortion and to obtain her consent she received the information. The information to be provided includes the medical risks associated with the proposed abortion method.

How to Take Action:

[Contact your representative](#) today to support HB 483.

Talking Points:

- This bill advances the life and dignity of both the unborn child and the woman who might undergo an abortion.
- It is not in the best interests of a woman to undergo this life-changing medical procedure without being fully informed of the true consequences of that procedure and potential alternatives.

New Bill Would Protect Religious Freedom and Rights of Conscience

Mar 11, 2013

Ask Congress to Support H.R. 940, the Health Care Conscience Rights Act

Thanks in large part to your efforts, Rep. Diane Black and fifty other House members introduced a new bill last week called the “Health Care Conscience Rights Act,” H.R. 940, which would protect Americans’ First Amendment rights by providing a full exemption for all those whose religious beliefs run counter to

the HHS mandate. The bill would also protect institutions and individuals from forced participation in abortion.

For more information, [watch a video](#) highlighting a few stories of people this bill would help. You also may [read letters from Archbishop Lori](#) and [Cardinal O'Malley](#) supporting the bill.

Call on Congress to protect the right of all people and groups to participate in life-affirming health care without violating their consciences. Contact your members of Congress to urge them to support H.R. 940 and help ensure its enactment as part of “must-pass” legislation. Find phone numbers for your members of Congress using the Call Now box in this [Action Alert](#) from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or [click here to email](#) your Representative and two Senators.

Please contact your Congressional representatives today and urge them to support H.R. 940 to protect religious freedom and the moral convictions of all.

Catholic Citizenship News Crossover Update

Apr 5, 2013

The New Hampshire Legislature recently marked its Crossover Day – the day by which the House and Senate each must complete all hearings and votes. Legislation that has passed the House has been sent to the Senate, and legislation that has passed the Senate has been sent to the House. As we enter the second half of the session, we provide you with a summary of the results of the bills we have been following and a look ahead at the legislation we will be tracking.

Here is the list of the topics:

[Abortion](#)

[Education](#)

[End-of-Life Issues](#)

[Immigration](#)

[Prisons](#)

[Temporary Assistance to Needy Families](#)

[Title Loans](#)

[How to Contact Your Representative](#)

Abortion

[HR 6](#) was introduced as a resolution “commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision and affirming support for its holding and principles.” The Diocese of Manchester opposed

this resolution because the language of this resolution claimed to speak on behalf of the State as a whole in supporting the Roe v. Wade decision and included other remarks offensive to the dignity of human life and the closely-held beliefs of many of the citizens of New Hampshire. Thanks to your efforts, the House voted to table this bill.

[HB 483](#) would have required a physician who performs an abortion, or the referring physician, to provide a pregnant woman with certain information at least 24 hours prior to the abortion and to obtain her consent she received the information. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass the House.

Education

The New Hampshire education tax credit program is at risk of repeal, and your advocacy can make a difference to maintain this program. The law allows businesses to make a donation to a scholarship organization in exchange for a tax credit against the state business profits tax and/or business enterprise tax for an amount equal to 85% of the donation. The donations are used by the scholarship organization to grant scholarships to New Hampshire children to attend nonpublic schools, including Catholic schools. Children age 5 through 20 who have not graduated from high school are eligible to apply if they meet certain income requirements. HB 370 seeks to repeal this program that gives families the opportunity to determine the educational setting that best meets the needs of each student. [View our Catholic Citizenship News alert on HB 370](#) for more information and talking points.

[Contact your Senator today to oppose HB 370.](#)

End-of-Life Issues

[HB 316](#) would allow and regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash is returned to the decedent's family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. The Diocese of Manchester has opposed alkaline hydrolysis because every human person has an innate dignity that calls for the remains of every deceased person to be treated with the utmost respect. [Read our testimony on HB 316.](#)

[Contact your senator to oppose HB 316.](#)

The [New Hampshire House passed HB 403](#), a bill initially introduced to study "death with dignity," also known as physician-assisted suicide. Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less. Although this bill was amended to study "end of life decisions," it is clear this bill includes the intent to study physician-assisted suicide. Some have argued that even if this bill is intended to study physician-assisted suicide, it merely is a study bill, and there is no harm in studying an issue. Passing this bill would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, however, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent. [For more information, visit the Archdiocese of Boston's website on Church teaching on dignity at the end of life.](#)

[Contact your senator soon to oppose HB 403.](#)

Immigration

Last year, New Hampshire passed a law requiring 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 do not currently 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. This bill would assist the children of immigrants who were brought to the United States by their parents and work hard in high school with the hope of going to college. HB 474 has been retained in committee.

Prisons

The bishops of the United States have questioned whether private, for-profit corporations effectively can operate prisons because “[t]he profit motive may lead to reduced efforts to change behaviors, treat substance abuse, and offer skills necessary for reintegration into the community.” *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice*, November 2000. A [January 2012 report](#) evaluated the claimed savings and potential risks to prisoners and staff and concluded “it is not in the best economic or public safety interests of New Hampshire to privatize its correctional system.” In light of the threats posed to the human dignity of prisoners and staff, we support [HB 443](#), a bill intended to block full-scale privatization of state prisons. The [Senate Finance Committee](#) will hold a hearing on HB 443 on April 9.

[Contact your representative today to support HB 443.](#)

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

[HB 121](#) would have required the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to implement a drug testing program for applicants of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Under this proposed plan, applicants would bear the cost of a drug test at a time when their families need help making ends meet. The Diocese of Manchester opposed HB 121 because families should not be forced to decide between paying for a drug test or basic necessities such as food and utilities because of a persistent myth that people who receive welfare engage in drug use at a higher percentage than people in the general population. We support safeguarding children and discouraging inappropriate and morally destructive behavior, but applying this policy across the board to all applicants at an additional expense and without reason of suspicion is unjust. Thanks to your efforts, the House did not pass this bill.

Title Loans

New Hampshire law allows lenders to issue loans secured by a borrower’s car title at excessive rates of interest. [HB 562](#) would cap the interest rate for this loan product at 36%, a rate consistent with the law in other states. The Diocese of Manchester supported this bill because these high-interest loans have a significant impact on low-wage earners and the poor, but this bill has been retained in committee.

How to Contact Your Representative

To find your representative and his or her contact information, visit: <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

NH House Considering End-of-Life Issues

Apr 15, 2013



The New Hampshire Senate soon will consider two bills on end-of-life issues:

- [HB 316](#) (Relative to Regulating Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)
- [HB 403](#) (Establishing a Committee to Study End of Life Decisions)

HB 316 (Alkaline Hydrolysis for the Disposal of Human Remains)

Background

[HB 316](#) would allow and regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash is returned to the decedent's family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process (reportedly as much as 300 gallons) is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. HB 316 passed the House, and a hearing on the bill will be held on April 17 before the Senate Executive

Departments and Administration Committee. The committee will vote before the bill is sent to the full Senate for consideration.

How to Take Action

[Contact members of the Executive Departments and Administration Committee](#) and [your senator ask them to oppose HB 316](#).

Talking Points

- Reverence and respect for human remains are important principles which have been reflected in society down through the ages.
- These principles are reflected in the system of New Hampshire state laws which govern how human remains are to be treated.
- The process of alkaline hydrolysis is prohibited in New Hampshire under current state law and should continue to be banned because it fails to provide New Hampshire citizens with the reverence and respect they should receive at the end of their lives.

HB 403 (“Death with Dignity” Study)

Background

The New Hampshire House passed [HB 403](#), a bill initially introduced to study “death with dignity,” also known as physician-assisted suicide. Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less. Although this bill was euphemistically amended to say that this is a study of “end of life decisions,” it is clear that the purpose of this bill is to study physician-assisted suicide. Some have argued that even if this bill is intended to study physician-assisted suicide, it merely is a study bill, and there is no harm in studying an issue. Passing this bill would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, however, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent. Contact your senator soon to oppose HB 403. [For more information, visit the Archdiocese of Boston’s website on Church teaching on dignity at the end of life](#).

How to Take Action

A hearing has been held on HB 403, but the committee has not voted. [Contact members of the Senate Health, Education & Human Services Committee](#) and [your senator and ask them to oppose HB 403](#).

Talking Points

- Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less.
- Some have argued this bill merely studies physician-assisted suicide, and there is no harm in studying an issue. Passing this bill would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, however, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent.

- People who request physician-assisted suicide are vulnerable. They need care and protection. Some claim physician-assisted suicide offers freedom, but it instead is a serious risk of neglect. This abandonment is especially irresponsible when society increasingly is aware of elder abuse, our limited resources for those with mental illnesses, and other forms of mistreatment and exploitation of vulnerable persons.
 - Even when a cure is not possible, medicine plays a critical role in providing palliative care – alleviating pain and other symptoms and meeting basic needs. Such care can provide a better way – combining medical skill with attention to the emotional as well as spiritual needs of those facing the end of life.
-

Contact the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and Gang of Eight Members

May 17, 2013



Call the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee and Gang of Eight Members

- Please support amendments which would increase the number of persons who could qualify for the path to citizenship and oppose amendments which would make eligibility more restrictive.

- Please support amendments which would restore and strengthen the current family-based immigration system - based upon the union of a husband and wife, and their children - and oppose amendments that would weaken the system.
- Please support current provisions in S.744 which strengthen protections for vulnerable populations, such as refugees, asylum-seekers, and unaccompanied children and oppose amendments which weaken those protections.

How to Take Action:

[CLICK HERE](#) to e-mail the message to the Senators in the Judiciary Committee and the Gang of Eight. Dial 1-866-940-2439 to call in your message to the Senate Judiciary Members.

For the four other Gang of Eight members not on the Judiciary Committee, call the individual Senators' offices at the following numbers:

- Sen. Marco Rubio: 202-224-3041
- Sen. Bob Menedez: 202-224-4744
- Sen. John McCain: 202-224-2235
- Sen. Michael Bennet: 202-224-5852

Urge your Senators to support a Farm Bill

Jun 3, 2013



Don't Miss Your Chance To Make Your Mark:

Urge your Senators to support a Farm Bill that feeds hungry people, promotes stewardship of creation, fosters small family farmers, and helps rural communities thrive!

TAKE ACTION NOW:

E-mail or **call** your Senators today and urge them to:

- Support a fair Farm Bill and amendments to programs that help feed hungry people at home and overseas, help rural communities thrive and encourage stewardship of creation;
- Oppose harmful amendments, cuts or structural changes to programs that help people and communities in need; and
- Urge your Senators to fix Amendment #1056 sponsored by Sen. David Vitter (R-LA) that bars for life people who have ever been convicted of certain violent crimes from receiving SNAP benefits. The impact of this amendment undermines restorative and rehabilitative justice and would lower SNAP benefits for their children and other family members in their care. Because of U.S. incarceration patterns, it would also have skewed racial impacts.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The Senate reconvenes this week to continue consideration of the 2013 Farm Bill with final votes expected soon. **The Senate's plan currently includes more than \$4 billion in cuts to the SNAP program and more than \$5 billion in cuts to conservation programs.** It also ends some subsidies (direct payments), which is a step in the right direction. The Senate recently adopted a harmful amendment (Vitter #1056) which will negatively impact persons who have ever been convicted of certain violent crimes and have paid their debt to society by denying them access to SNAP benefits for life and reducing benefit levels for their children and family members. The Senate must fix this amendment before a final vote on the Farm Bill.

The Catholic community, led by the **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), the National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC) and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVDP)** support important provisions in the 2013 Farm Bill that save lives, lift people out of poverty and promote environmental stewardship. The bishops acknowledge that reducing future unsustainable deficits is important but remind Congress that their decisions are not just economic in nature but are "political and moral choices with human consequences." However, at a time of continued unemployment and high levels of poverty, the Senate should oppose cuts to effective anti-hunger programs that help people live in dignity and strengthen and support programs that help conserve our land and resources for future generations.

The Catholic community also urges further reductions in subsidies and reforms to crop insurance subsidies so that small and medium-sized farmers and ranchers who truly need assistance, especially minority owned farms, are supported rather than larger growers and industrial agriculture. Savings from

cuts to subsidies should be used to support hunger and nutrition programs that feed hungry, poor and vulnerable people at home and abroad.

USCCB POSITION/CHURCH TEACHING:

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI stated that "Liberation from the yoke of hunger is the first concrete expression of the right to life." The U.S. bishops and their Catholic partners also remind Congress that food is a fundamental human right. For more information about our position, [read their recent letter](#) to Congress. [Visit the USCCB website](#) for more information, updates and alerts on the Farm Bill.

Take Action Now!

Your voice is needed now to ensure that the Senate supports programs that feed hungry people, preserves creation and supports small family farmers and rural America. To send the letter in an e-mail to your Senators, [click here](#). To call your Senators, find their telephone numbers by [clicking here](#).

For information, updates and alerts on the Farm Bill, see the USCCB Farm Bill page [click here](#). Thank you for your continued dedication and advocacy.

Thank you for your continued dedication and advocacy.

New Hampshire Legislative Session Ends

Aug 19, 2013

While the budget and other issues dominated the headlines, your advocacy on several bills made a difference, especially in lifting up the dignity of human life from conception to natural death. Click the links below for more information, and be sure to check out End-of-Life Issues to learn about Governor Hassan's veto of HB 403, a bill amended to study "end of life decisions."

Legislators will begin filing requests for bills in September. Watch for Catholic Citizenship News for alerts next session and contact your elected officials because in the words of Pope Francis, "We must be involved in politics because politics is one of the highest forms of charity for it seeks the common good."

Abortion

[HR 6](#) was introduced as a resolution "commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision and affirming support for its holding and principles." The Diocese opposed this resolution because the language of the resolution claimed to speak on behalf of the State as a whole in supporting the Roe v. Wade decision and included other remarks offensive to the dignity of human life and the closely-held beliefs of many of the citizens of New Hampshire. Thanks to your efforts, the House voted to table this bill. Typically, "tabling" the bill would mean to set it aside for possible consideration at a future time, but in this instance, it was intended the bill would not be set for another vote.

[B 483](#) would have required a physician who performs an abortion, or the referring physician, to provide a

pregnant woman with certain information at least 24 hours prior to the abortion and to obtain her consent she received the information. Unfortunately, this bill did not pass the House.

Education

The New Hampshire education tax credit program allows businesses to make a donation to a scholarship organization in exchange for a tax credit against the state business profits tax and/or business enterprise tax for an amount equal to 85% of the donation. The donations are used by the scholarship organization to grant scholarships to New Hampshire children to attend nonpublic schools. Children age 5 through 20 who have not graduated from high school are eligible to apply if they meet certain income requirements. [HB 370](#) sought to repeal this program that gives families the opportunity to determine the educational setting that best meets the needs of each student. Thanks to your advocacy, the Senate voted to table HB 370.

As you may have seen in the news, a lawsuit was filed against the State of New Hampshire, challenging the constitutionality of the law that created the education tax credit program. A New Hampshire Superior Court decision recently upheld most of the education tax credit program but declared that scholarships may not be used to attend a religious school. We are disappointed in the court's ruling, and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester filed a motion to intervene in the appeal to the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

End-of-Life Issues

[HB 316](#) sought to regulate alkaline hydrolysis for the disposal of human remains. In this process, the human body is reduced to bone ash and a sterile liquid substance through a chemical reaction. While the bone ash may be returned to the decedent's family, the liquid substance that is produced in the process is flushed away, usually into the public waste system. The Diocese of Manchester opposes this legalization of alkaline hydrolysis because every human person has an innate dignity that calls for the remains of every deceased person to be treated with the utmost respect. Thanks to efforts by concerned Catholics, this bill failed in the Senate.

[HB 403](#) initially was introduced to study "death with dignity," also known as physician-assisted suicide. Many people fear the process of dying, but a caring society responds with more attention to vulnerable, ill individuals, not less. Although this bill was amended to study "end of life decisions," it is clear this bill included the intent to study physician-assisted suicide. Some argued that even if this bill was intended to study physician-assisted suicide, it merely was a study bill, and there is no harm in studying an issue. The Diocese opposed this bill because passing it would send the message that suicide has a place in our society, and suicide is a terrible tragedy we should work to prevent. After [HB 403](#) passed the House and Senate, Governor Hassan issued the first veto of her term and defeated it. We thank Governor Hassan for her veto and for noting that "with any discussion of the complex and emotional issues related to end-of-life decisions, our focus must always be first and foremost on helping all of those in our society to fully live their lives with the dignity that they deserve."

Immigration

Last year, New Hampshire passed a law requiring 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](#) was filed to modify the New Hampshire affidavit requirement to allow students who do not currently 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. This bill would assist the children of immigrants who were brought to the United States by their parents and work hard in high school with the hope of going to college. HB 474 has been retained in committee while the federal government considers comprehensive immigration reform. Retained bills remain in committee after the end of the legislative session for further study. The committees conduct work sessions and will report on retained bills by November 22, 2013.

Prisons

The bishops of the United States have questioned whether private, for-profit corporations effectively can operate prisons because “[t]he profit motive may lead to reduced efforts to change behaviors, treat substance abuse, and offer skills necessary for reintegration into the community.” *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice*, November 2000. In light of the threats posed to the human dignity of prisoners and staff, the Diocese supported [HB 443](#), a bill intended to block full-scale privatization of state prisons. Unfortunately, the bill failed in the Senate.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

[HB 121](#) would have required the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to implement a drug testing program for applicants of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Under this proposed plan, applicants would bear the cost of a drug test at a time when their families need help making ends meet. The Diocese of Manchester opposed HB 121 because families should not be forced to decide between paying for a drug test or basic necessities such as food and utilities because of a persistent myth that people who receive welfare benefits engage in drug use at a higher percentage than people in the general population. We support safeguarding children and discouraging inappropriate and morally destructive behavior, but applying this policy across the board to all applicants at an additional expense and without reason of suspicion is unjust. Thanks to your efforts, the House did not pass this bill.

Title Loans

New Hampshire law allows lenders to issue loans secured by the title of a borrower’s car at excessive rates of interest. [HB 562](#) would cap the interest rate for this loan product at 36%, a rate consistent with the law in other states. The Diocese of Manchester supported this bill because these high-interest loans have a significant impact on low-wage earners and the poor. The bill has been retained in the House Commerce and Consumer Affairs committee, and a subcommittee has been conducting work sessions.

Thank You for Your Advocacy!

Your efforts this session truly made a difference. Remember that on some bills, fewer than one dozen contacts from constituents may influence a legislator's vote. Drafting already is underway for the bills for next session, and a number of bills are expected to address issues of Catholic teaching. So next session, be ready to make your voice heard!

Now and at the Hour of Our Death: Catholic Teaching on Care at the End of Life

Learn about Catholic teaching on end-of-life issues at the 5th annual Catholics in the Public Square event on November 16 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the New Hampshire Institute of Politics at Saint Anselm College. Fr. Myles Sheehan, a member of the Jesuits, Society of Jesus and a graduate of Dartmouth Medical School, will share Church teaching on end-of-life care and the appropriate role of medicine. Bishop Peter A. Libasci will explain the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and its common misinterpretation. Other topics include the New Hampshire Advance Directive Form and end-of-life issues before the New Hampshire Legislature. This event is sponsored by the Diocese of Manchester, and registration is available online at publicsquare.eventbrite.com or by contacting Kimberly Low at 663-0131 or klow@rcbm.org.

How to Contact Your Representative

[CLICK HERE](#) to find your representative and his or her contact information.

ACTION ALERT: Urge Congress to Choose Dialogue and Diplomacy in Syria!

Sep 5, 2013

Contact your two U.S. Senators and your Representative and urge them to vote against a resolution authorizing the use of military force in Syria. Instead, ask them to support U.S. leadership, in collaboration with the international community, for an immediate ceasefire in Syria and serious, inclusive negotiations for peace.

Take action now! [Call](#) or [write](#) your Representative and Senators!

Tell your Representative and Senators:

As Congress debates a resolution authorizing military force in Syria, I urge the Senator/Representative instead to support U.S. leadership for peace.

Both the Holy See and Conference of Bishops have condemned the chemical attack, but remain convinced that only dialogue can save lives and bring about peace in Syria.

In a recent letter to Secretary of State John Kerry, Bishop Richard E. Pates, Chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, wrote: "[T]he path of dialogue and negotiation between all components of Syrian society, with the support of the international community, is the only option to put an end to the conflict....' We ask the United States to work with other governments to obtain a ceasefire, initiate serious negotiations, provide impartial and neutral humanitarian assistance, and encourage building an inclusive society in Syria that protects the rights of all its citizens, including Christians and other minorities."

CURRENT SITUATION

During the week of September 9, Congress is expected to take up a resolution authorizing the use of military force in Syria in response to heinous chemical weapons attacks on innocent civilians.

Providentially, Pope Francis has declared September 7 a Day of Fasting and Prayer for Peace in Syria, the Middle East, and throughout the World. In solidarity with our Holy Father, USCCB will engage in prayer, fasting and advocacy for peace in Syria.

USCCB POSITION & CHURCH TEACHING

[USCCB Policy Letters on Syria](#)

[Pope Francis' Declaration of a Day of Prayer and Fasting for Syria](#)

[Position of the Holy See on Syria](#)

Take Action Now!

To e-mail your Members of Congress, [CLICK HERE](#).

Thank you for your continued dedication and advocacy.

ACTION ALERT: Support people struggling with hunger!

Sep 16, 2013

Urge your Representative to oppose drastic cuts and changes to SNAP/food stamps that will harm hungry and vulnerable people.

The House is expected to vote on cuts the week of September 16!

ACTION:

The House is expected to vote on a nutrition bill as early as Wednesday, September 18!

[E-mail](#) or [call](#) your Representative and urge him or her to oppose the \$40 billion in drastic cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/food stamps). Tell your Representative a nutrition bill that would remove 4 to 6 million vulnerable people from the program violates our commitment to the common good. At a time of continued high unemployment these harmful cuts and changes will increase hunger among children, poor families, vulnerable seniors and workers who are underemployed or unable to find employment. Faith communities and charities cannot meet the needs of so many hungry people in our country by themselves.

Tell your Representative:

- **Oppose** the proposed \$40 billion in harmful cuts and changes to SNAP in the House nutrition bill;
- **Oppose** proposals to cut SNAP benefits to people who have at some point in their lives committed certain serious crimes and have paid their debt to society. People and their families should not pay for the sins of the past;
- **Oppose** proposals that limit people's access to food stamps by preventing states from effectively responding to local needs and economic conditions;
- Those who receive benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) should also be able to receive food stamps to meet their needs without additional bureaucracy or paperwork. (Also known as "**categorical eligibility**")

CURRENT SITUATION:

In July, the House passed a version of the Farm Bill that removed SNAP (food stamps) and other nutrition programs from the Farm Bill. Next week, the House could vote on a bill that includes \$40 billion in cuts and structural changes to SNAP that, if passed, would have serious and harmful impacts on the most hungry and vulnerable seniors, children, and unemployed in our country. Congress should consider finding savings in the Farm Bill by ending direct payments and prioritizing agriculture subsidies in a way that helps farmers and ranchers most in need, rather than benefits large industrial agriculture.

USCCB POSITION/CHURCH TEACHING:

The "scandal of hunger" which Pope Francis has addressed, and the struggle that many poor, underemployed and unemployed people continue to face in our nation, demands we respond by turning away from indifference. At World Youth Day, 2013, Pope Francis called for, "those in possession of greater resources, to public authorities and to all people of good will who are working for social justice: never tire of working for a more just world, marked by greater solidarity! No one can remain insensitive to the inequalities that persist in the world!"

Take Action Now!

Your voice is needed now to ensure that SNAP benefits are protected to feed and protect poor, hungry and vulnerable people.

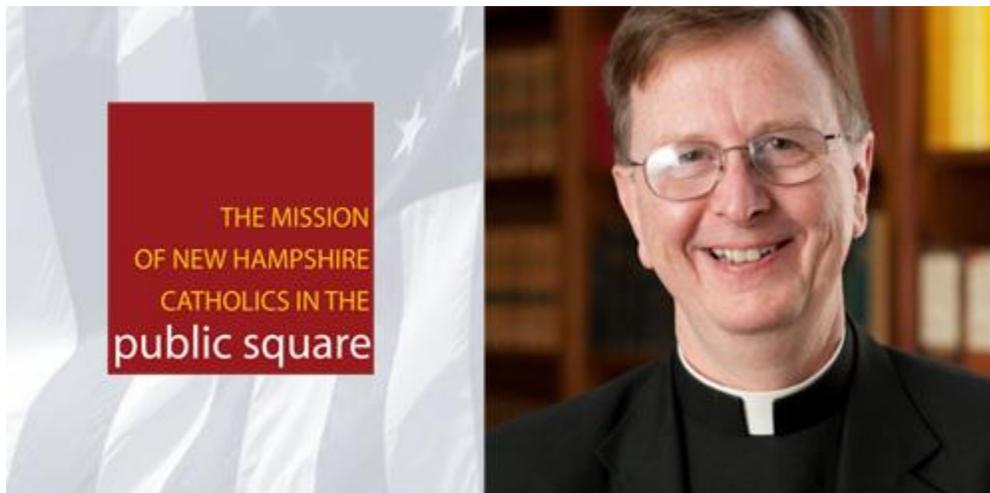
[Look up](#) your Representative's number and call today!

[E-mail](#) your Representative now!

Thank you for your continued dedication and advocacy.

Fr. Myles Sheehan, SJ, MD to Speak on Catholic Teaching on Care at the End of Life

Oct 16, 2013



Register Today - Space Filling Quickly

Fr. Myles Sheehan, a Jesuit and graduate of Dartmouth Medical School, will be the keynote speaker at the Diocese of Manchester's 5th annual Catholics in the Public Square event on November 16 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the NH Institute of Politics at Saint Anselm College. Father Sheehan is a dynamic and engaging speaker and will share Church teaching on end-of-life care as well as the appropriate role of medicine. Bishop Peter A. Libasci will explain the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and its common misinterpretation. Other topics include the New Hampshire Advance Directive Form and end-of-life issues before the New Hampshire Legislature.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register online or contact Kimberly Low at klow@rcbm.org or 663-0131.

[Download Flyer](#) (pdf)

Oppose the SAFE Act: National Call-In Day to Congress on November 13

Nov 7, 2013



Background:

The Strengthen and Fortify Enforcement (SAFE) Act (H.R. 2278) is an immigration reform bill pending in the United States House. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops opposes the SAFE Act for several reasons, including because it would place faith-based charities and Good Samaritans at risk of criminal prosecution.

- Provisions in the SAFE Act would criminalize religious leaders and houses of worship that provide humanitarian assistance to all persons regardless of immigration status.
- The Act would permit state and local law enforcement officers, untrained in federal immigration law, to issue an immigration hold and detain an individual indefinitely, resulting in prolonged detention for United States citizens and lawful permanent residents.
- The detention policy proposed in the SAFE Act calls for an increase in the number of detention facilities, an increase in the population to be detained, and an increase in funding for state and local governments to detain individuals in local jails. These proposals would lead to an increased cost to taxpayers nearing \$1 billion/year.

How to Take Action:

- Participate in the Justice for Immigrants National Call-In Day to Congress on Wednesday, November 13 by calling 1-855-589-5698. On that day, callers dialing into the toll-free number will hear a short recording instructing them to give the following message to their member of Congress: “Support a path to citizenship and oppose the SAFE Act.” After the recording, callers will then be prompted to enter their zip code on their telephone keypad and will be connected directly to their Representative’s Washington office.
- If you are not available to call on November 13, contact your Representative directly to oppose the SAFE Act. To find your Representative, visit www.house.gov and enter your zip code in the box on the top right corner.