



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 4, 2024

Senator Sharon Carson, Chair
And Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee
State House
Concord, NH 03301

Re: **CACR 24 (Constitutional Right to Abortion)**

Dear Senator Carson 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 CACR 24**, which seeks to establish a constitutional right to abortion in New Hampshire by stating that “an individual’s right to personal reproductive autonomy is central to the liberty and dignity to determine one’s own life course and shall not be denied or infringed.”

It strikes me that most people in New Hampshire, regardless of their political or religious persuasions, share a common concern that the principles of human dignity and solidarity are beset by many challenges in today’s world. So as the Committee deliberates on CACR 24, I ask that you consider this fundamental question:

Would the work of building up human dignity and solidarity be advanced by the adoption of a constitutional amendment which effectively declares certain human beings to be disposable?

The answer to this question seems self-evident. As Pope Francis has put it:

[The] defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems. **Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be.**

Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *The Joy of the Gospel*, 213 (2013).



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It should not be overlooked just what CACR 24 actually seeks to bless. Because the proposed language covers all abortions of any type, among the abortions this proposal would deem to be “central to the liberty and dignity to determine one’s life course” would be, for example, abortions done up to the moment of birth, abortions done for purposes of sex selection, and abortions done because the unborn child is presumed to have a disability.

We ask you once again to consider how the promotion of abortion has impacts in other areas. The dignity of the young human being who needs food or housing or health care or refuge is inseparable from the dignity of the young human being in the womb. Once we ask society to treat certain ones of us as expendable, we cannot be surprised if society begins to treat certain ones of us as expendable.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to recommend ITL on CACR 24.

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 a large, stylized circular flourish.

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