



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 15, 2022

Via email only

Hon. Mark Pearson, Chair
And Members of the House HHS Committee
Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 1080 (Conscience Protections for Healthcare Providers Regarding Abortions, Artificial Contraception, and Sterilizations)

Dear Mr. Chair 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 **support for HB 1080**.

HB 1080 affirms the rights of health care providers against having to perform or assist in certain medical procedures which would violate their consciences. Most significantly, HB 1080 would ensure that health care providers may not be compelled to perform or assist in abortions.

The *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* (known colloquially as “the ERDs”) is a document that is promulgated by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops which provides guidance to Catholic health care institutions and to Catholic health care professionals employed in non-Catholic settings. While the ERDs obviously are written from a Catholic perspective, they are based on an analysis of natural law and thus they might be instructive in any sort of context. I think the following is a useful summary of the obligations that Catholic health care providers have with respect to the formation of conscience:

The dialogue between medical science and Christian faith has for its primary purpose the common good of all human persons. It presupposes that science and faith do not contradict each other. Both are grounded in respect for truth and freedom. As new knowledge and new technologies expand, each person must form a correct conscience based on the moral norms for proper health care.

Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (Sixth Edition), General Introduction.

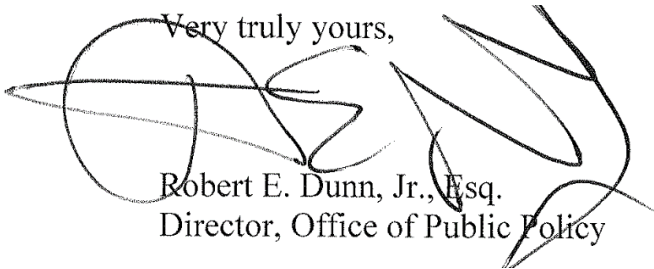
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It seems beyond doubt that there can be no graver reason for a person to look to their conscience rights and obligations than when the person is asked or compelled to participate in the direct taking of another human life (and it certainly will come as no surprise that the ERDs designate abortion as an intrinsically immoral act that is always forbidden.) I know of course that there are those who disagree with that and who firmly believe that the law should allow for the taking of the life of an unborn child. It should be noted, though, that if there is to be any logical consistency with respect to the question of choice as exercised within the context of abortion, it cannot be that the choice made by one person must at all costs be vindicated, while the choice made by another must at all costs be thwarted.

HB 1080 provides important protections for healthcare providers with respect to abortion, artificial contraception, and sterilization, and I respectfully ask that you vote to recommend HB 1080 as ought to pass.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert E. Dunn, Jr.', is written over a circular stamp. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'R' and 'D'.

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