



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 31, 2022

Via email only

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

Re: HB 1536 (Expanding Postpartum Coverage Under Medicaid)

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 1536**. I would note that the policy of expanding postpartum Medicaid benefits to 12 months is supported by Catholic Bishops around the country.

Whenever we review a piece of legislation, our inquiry begins with a look at the bill through the twin prisms of human dignity and the common good, the two principles which are at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching (and which of course are also the foundations of our state and federal constitutional systems). We think that HB 1536 unquestionably advances those principles.

Anyone who has been a parent or who knows a new mother can testify to the challenges of the first year of motherhood. Thus, it seems self-evident that HB 1536 is an important way to support these new mothers and their babies at an especially critical juncture in their lives. Moreover, those who have brought HB 1536 forward (like those who have advanced postpartum Medicaid expansion around the country) have made a compelling data-based case that this expansion indeed will provide critical public health benefits to new mothers and their babies, including in areas like behavioral health.

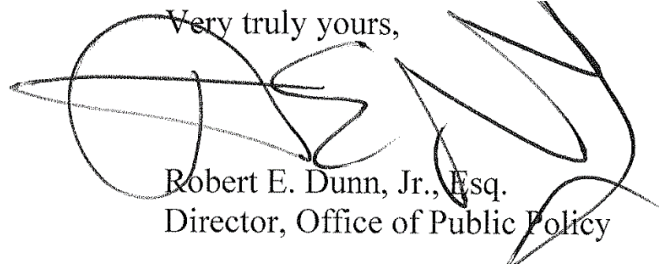
It is also worth noting the likely financial benefits to the State. Making it possible for qualifying new mothers to obtain good postpartum care for an additional 10 months in the first year of parenthood might well be expected to mitigate the need for more costly types of services or interventions later on.

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As a society, we should accompany new mothers and their babies and help them have a healthy and thriving family life. Therefore, I respectfully ask that you vote ought to pass on HB 1536.

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. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with a large loop on the left side and a sharp, upward-pointing stroke on the right side.

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