



## DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

April 20, 2023

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

### **Re: HB 639 (Legalization of Marijuana)**

Dear Senator Carson and Members of the Committee:

As 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 HB 639**, which legalizes marijuana. (We take no position with respect to the sections of the bill that only concern the corporate form of alternative treatment centers.)

Over the years, the Diocese of Manchester has consistently opposed proposals to legalize the recreational use of marijuana because, in our view, the common good would be harmed by the passage of this type of legislation. We hope that you will look at this legislation in the light of that foundational principle, which as you know undergirds the body politic that was established by the constitution.

Our state continues to struggle with a substance misuse crisis that has cost the lives of thousands of people and devastated the lives and health of countless more of our neighbors. Catholic ministries around the state are seeing the effects of this first-hand. With that perspective in mind, we urge you not to pass a bill that would legalize yet another drug that potentially harms those who are most in need of our protection and which would be the cause of unnecessary financial costs to the State of New Hampshire, local governments, and New Hampshire families. The information for the HB 639 fiscal note as supplied by the Department of Safety and the NH Municipal Association (which according to the FN was based on the legalization experiences of Colorado, Illinois, and Washington State) includes some instructive examples concerning the types of problems that are likely to flow from the legalization of marijuana in this state.



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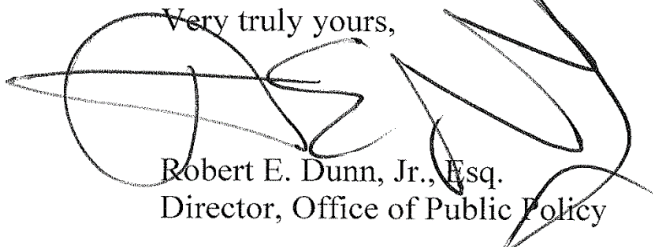
As you conduct your review of this legislation, we respectfully suggest that the following questions must be answered:

- 1. Will the passage of this law protect our youth and improve family life?**
- 2. Will the passage of this law improve public health?**
- 3. Will the passage of this law improve communities?**
- 4. Will the passage of this law make people better workers and strengthen our business workforce?**

In our view, the answer to all these questions is decidedly “no”. We think that any revenue that might come to the State from the enactment of this sort of legislation is sure to be outweighed by the financial cost -and even more, the social cost – of the measure. Therefore, we respectfully urge you to recommend ITL on HB 639.

Thank you as always for your kind consideration of our views.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Dunn, Jr.", written over the typed name and title.

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