



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER  
*Secretariat for Administration*

January 22, 2014

The Honorable Nancy Stiles  
Senate Health, Education & Human Services Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 103  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**Re: SB 259 (Establishing a Palliative Care Center for Health Care Consumers and Providers and Continually Appropriating a Special Fund)**

Dear Senator Stiles and Members of the Health, Education, and Human Services 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 express our **support for SB 259**, a bill to establish a palliative care center.

Today, many people fear serious illnesses and the process of dying. The healing art of medicine is an important part of how we, as a society, can respond with care and compassion to these fears. 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 should combine medical skill with attention to the emotional as well as spiritual needs of those facing serious illness as well as those facing the end of life. For those diagnosed with terminal illnesses, effective palliative care allows patients to devote their attention to the unfinished business of their lives and to arrive at a sense of peace with God, with loved ones, and with themselves.

Pope Benedict XVI stressed “the need for more palliative care centres which provide integral care, offering the sick the human assistance and spiritual accompaniment they need. This is a right belonging to every human being, one which we must all be committed to defend.” *Message of His Holiness Benedict XVI for the Fifteenth World Day of the Sick, December 8, 2006.* The Catholic Church in New Hampshire has been working to educate Catholics about compassionate care for those facing serious and terminal illness, including palliative care. We support SB 259 because it would create a center dedicated to educating the public and health care providers about palliative care. This center would be a significant start toward helping the public and health care providers understand palliative care – and that has tremendous value for some of our most vulnerable New Hampshire citizens.



We urge you to report SB 259 as ought to pass because we, as a society, should respond to those with serious and terminal illnesses with compassion should provide them with education about the care options available. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony and for your service to the people of New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Meredith Cook".

Meredith P. Cook, Esq.  
Director, Office of Public Policy

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