

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

February 25, 2022

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Hart Senate Office Building  
Room 506  
Washington, DC

[ariel\\_marshall@shaheen.senate.gov](mailto:ariel_marshall@shaheen.senate.gov)

Dear Senator Shaheen:

On Monday (February 28) the Senate will be voting on H.R. 3755, the “Women’s Health Protection Act”. I am writing to respectfully urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to vote against this deceptively-named bill that would impose abortion on demand nationwide at any stage of pregnancy, eliminate modest state and federal laws like parental notification, force all Americans to support abortions here and abroad with their tax dollars, and potentially compel health care providers and professionals to perform, assist in, and/or refer for abortion against their deeply-held beliefs.

Your service as Governor and as a member of the New Hampshire state senate undoubtedly gives you a unique perspective on the federalism issues that are at stake here. I feel sure that, when you served in those state positions, you had many occasions to advocate for “the New Hampshire solution” as opposed to what was coming from the federal level of government. Those principles of federalism are strongly threatened by this piece of legislation, which is designed to wipe away, in one fell swoop, the various approaches to abortion regulation that the people of each state - including your own- have seen fit to put into place.

I understand that there is a great divide in our country around the issue of abortion. But I firmly believe that most people in New Hampshire, regardless of political or religious persuasion, share a concern that the fundamental principles of human dignity and solidarity are beset by many challenges today. Please think about this legislation in that light. It seems hard to fathom how the work of building dignity and solidarity can be advanced by the passage of a law that is specifically designed to treat certain human beings as disposable. I ask you to consider these important words of Pope Francis:

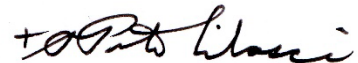
**[The] defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other 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).

I think that this only stands to reason. If we want our society to respect and value the child who is a refugee, or the child who is homeless, or the child who does not have access to health care, then we need to respect and value the child in the womb as well. If society decides that certain ones of us can be considered expendable, we should not be surprised if society treats certain ones of us as expendable. This is why I implore you to vote against this bill.

Thank you for your kind consideration of these comments. As always, please be assured of my prayers for you and your family.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter A. Libasci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.  
Bishop of Manchester