



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

January 25, 2024

Brothers in Christ,

I write to bring a serious matter to your attention. A bill has been introduced in the New Hampshire Legislature, HB 1283, seeking to legalize assisted suicide; you may hear assisted suicide proponents euphemistically refer to this as “medical aid in dying”. I ask for your help to prevent New Hampshire from taking any steps down the disastrous path to state-approved suicide.

Assisted suicide laws run contrary to what we know in our hearts as followers of Jesus Christ who time and again healed those who were sick and who called us to care for those who are ill. Assisted suicide laws insidiously encourage the sin of despair and are thus a serious occasion of sin against the virtue of hope in God. They are contrary to our most basic conviction that every human life has a dignity and a value. And they also put vulnerable persons at risk – the frail, the elderly, the sick, those with disabilities, those with mental illnesses, and all who are at a heightened risk for suicide.

The New Hampshire House of Representatives will vote on HB 1283 in the coming weeks. I have attached a flyer that provides more information about this bill, and you are welcome to use this document as you deem appropriate, including using it as a bulletin insert or posting it to the parish website.

Given the grave potential consequences of this bill, please ask your parishioners and friends to sign in on the legislative website in opposition to HB 1283 and to contact their state representatives to urge them to vote down HB 1283. Our focus must be on improving end-of-life care for those with terminal illnesses, and not on steering people toward suicide. The flyer provides instructions on how to contact legislators and to sign in remotely in opposition to the bill. Please feel free to contact Bob Dunn, our Director of Public Policy, if you would like further information or assistance on this bill or any other legislative issues.

Grateful for all you do to promote the dignity of human life, I remain

Fraternally in Christ,

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

Enclosure



# Diocese of Manchester

## *The Catholic Church in New Hampshire*

**CONTACT YOUR NH REPRESENTATIVES AND OPPOSE ASSISTED SUICIDE**

### ***Real Compassion—NOT SUICIDE—is the Answer***

The New Hampshire Legislature is considering a bill (**HB 1283**) to legalize assisted suicide in this state. The public hearing is **February 7 at 10 a.m.** in the House Judiciary Committee.

We know that our priority should be **to care for the patient, not to kill the patient**. As Pope Francis has said, “We must accompany people towards death, but not provoke death or facilitate any form of suicide.” *Catechesis at General Audience*, Feb. 9, 2022.

We are working alongside the NH Coalition for Suicide Prevention, a diverse group that includes health care providers and people with disabilities and their advocates.

Among the many reasons why HB 1283 is a dangerous bill:

- **New Hampshire has a serious suicide crisis**, especially among groups including at-risk teens, veterans with traumatic brain injury and people living with disabilities. In response, the State is trying to eliminate suicide. But HB 1283 would *normalize* suicide as medical care and send a message that dangerously contradicts suicide prevention efforts.
- History shows that laws on state-approved suicide have a natural tendency to expand in scope. HB 1283 applies to people with a terminal illness with 6 months left to live. **If HB 1283 is passed, how would the law be expanded next year and in the years after that?**
- The top reasons given by people who end their lives under Oregon’s assisted suicide law include “fear of being a burden to others” and “loss of independence.” Because these are things that people with disabilities encounter every day, one prominent NH advocate has said that passage of an assisted suicide law is like saying to people with disabilities that “you are better off dead.”
- **An assisted suicide law invites coercion.** Elder abuse and exploitation are already significant problems in this state and nationwide. Assisted suicide puts a new weapon into the hands of exploiters – the opportunity to persuade someone to use the assisted suicide law.

### **HELP TO STOP STATE-APPROVED SUICIDE**

- **Before Feb. 7, sign-in online to register opposition to HB 1283 at:**  
[gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/remotetestimony](https://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/remotetestimony)
- **Contact your House members and respectfully ask them to reject HB 1283.**

*Your representatives are listed at:*  
[gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members](https://gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members)

**For live links and more information:**  
[catholicnh.org/nosuicide](https://catholicnh.org/nosuicide)

**Let us have *true* compassion and recognize and defend the inalienable dignity and value of every human being, at all stages of life and in all conditions of life.**