

New Hampshire Right to Life

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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HOLLOW PRO-LIFE GROUP FLUBS HB-656 LEGISLATION

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A small band of usually pro-life activists has succeeded in passing the pro-death legislation known as HB-656 by a heart-breaking vote of 168 to 165 during today's Committee of Conference.

The so-called "Citizens for Life" group, led by one Roger Stenson, summarily ignored this legislation for months and months while other NH pro-life groups earnestly worked very hard against HB-656. Then, just hours prior to our last chance at blocking this bill, Roger Stenson issued a press release supporting the bill. He did so knowing that NH Right to Life, NH Pro-life Council, Cornerstone Policy Research, the House Republican Alliance, the Union Leader, and the NH Catholic diocese led by Bishop John McCormack all formally opposed the legislation.

"NH Right to Life is devastated that a presumed friend of life would enter the legislative battle at the very last minute and support the 17 pages of complex legislation," said NHRTL President Darlene Pawlik. "Worse, Mr. Stenson's press release was printed and circulated in the State House by our ideological opponents in order to confuse some legislators into supporting HB-656," she said. "Much as it is Mr. Stenson's right to do so, he woefully focused on the few good bones thrown into the poisonous 17 page witches' brew. Stenson has jeopardized many lives in the hopes of sparing a few," said NH Right to Life Legislative Director Rep. Kathleen Souza. "He thought he could outsmart the devil."

"Every indication is that 'Citizens for Life' is just a select few individuals, led by Roger Stenson," said NHRTL-PAC Chairman Ed Holdgate. "They do not hold open elections for leadership, nor do they hold membership meetings. It is a 'smoke filled room' group with a leader on a payroll," he continued. "NHRTL however, is guided by 15 volunteers, openly elected during annual membership meetings. Not one is on any payroll – we work out of heartfelt compassion for babies, moms, and those in the twilight of life only," Holdgate insisted. "While Roger Stenson enjoys recognition and funding from National Right to Life, his organization has been hollow for years, and now he has singularly flubbed by 3 votes the pro-life defenses of many other NH groups faithfully standing in the gap against HB-656," Holdgate concluded.

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