



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on August 31, 2010

Beware the Pro-Life Alliance

I received an e-mail last evening from an ardent and perpetually active pro-life woman in my state of New Hampshire who was irate over the fact that the National Pro-Life Alliance in Washington, D.C., has announced that Manchester attorney Ovide Lamontagne is the number one pro-life candidate in this year's New Hampshire U.S. Senate race and please send money to help the Pro-Life Alliance elect Ovide and people like him to high public office.



The woman is angry because Lamontagne, whose clients include the Roman Catholic Diocese of Manchester, has been laboring to bring about a merger — officially called an alliance — between Catholic Medical Center in Manchester and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital, a medical facility that, like so many others, offers abortion and contraception among its reproductive “health” services. The terms of the “alliance” are such that it amounts to a takeover of CMC by Dartmouth-Hitchcock and, whatever they agree to do nor not do, it would mean the end of a Catholic hospital in New Hampshire's largest city.

“No one who helps to sell out a Catholic pro-life hospital to one of the biggest promoters of abortion rights in the Northeast is pro-life. I don't care what he says he is!!!” the lady wrote.

But of course the moneychangers in Washington do not know and possibly do not care what Lamontagne has been up to. They have an attractive candidate they think they can market to help their cause, which is to increase the wealth, power, and influence of the National Pro-Life Coalition.

To the lady's observations, I would add that when Lamontagne ran for Governor in 1996, his opponent, a state (and now U.S.) Senator named Jeanne Shaheen, challenged him on his pro-life stand in a televised debate. Lamontagne backpedaled from his own position so quickly and frenetically I thought he might fall off the stage — and almost wished he would.

Yes, Lamontagne said, he is pro-life. But that is a federal issue, not a state issue, and therefore, was not an issue in the gubernatorial campaign. It was a remarkable statement from a man who during his primary campaign against U.S. Rep. Bill Zeliff, a “pro-choice” Republican, did a targeted mailing to identified pro-lifers telling them how important it was to have a pro-life conservative in the corner office in Concord.

He lost in a landslide, and I do not even remotely suggest he would have won if he had been more forthright for the defense of human life. But he wouldn't have done any worse. His Faustian bargain ended as all such bargains ultimately end. He had mortgaged his soul and got nothing in return. Shaheen was elected and signed the legislative repeal of the state's anti-abortion laws. As a result, New Hampshire was left with no law of any kind on its books regulating abortion.

Jeanne Shaheen was promptly “honored” with a “Champion of Choice” Award by the New Hampshire chapter of the National Abortion Rights Action League and also has among her trophies the Margaret Sanger Award from the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. That was our Governor for six years



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in New Hampshire, though Lamontagne said it was a federal, not a state issue, so it didn't matter.

Didn't matter? Not a state issue? Following Shaheen's tenure, New Hampshire elected a genuinely pro-life Governor in Craig Benson. By all accounts Benson labored hard to persuade legislators to pass a parental notification law for New Hampshire, something the lawmakers had rejected time and again. But Gov. Benson was successful, got the law passed, and signed it. It was immediately challenged by Planned Parenthood and the New Hampshire Civil Liberties Union. A federal judge ruled it unconstitutional and Attorney General Kelly Ayotte, now one of Lamontagne's opponents in the September 14 primary, appealed that ruling and continued to appeal it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, despite pressure to drop the case from pro-abortion legislators and the governor who appointed her, Democrat John Lynch, who had by then succeeded Benson. The court, in *Planned Parenthood v. Ayotte*, found the legislation constitutionally flawed and the Democratic legislature elected in 2006 repealed it. Gov. Lynch, of course, signed the repeal, leaving New Hampshire again with no law whatsoever regulating abortion and abortion "rights." But Lamontagne said it was not a state issue and therefore a "non-issue" when he ran for Governor.

Few may remember it now, but when New Hampshire Right to Life, in the last days before that 1996 election, ran a radio ad urging voters to elect pro-life candidates, the ad made no mention of the race for Governor. The difference between the shamelessly pro-abortion Jeanne Shaheen and the timidly "pro-life" Ovide Lamontagne was considered not worth mentioning by New Hampshire's premier right-to-life organization. But chances are the people at the National Pro-Life Alliance don't know that. And it is quite possible they don't care.



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