



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 18, 2020

HB 559

Family Investment Program – Temporary Cash Assistance – Funding

House Appropriations Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

House Bill 559 would increase the levels of Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) incrementally to meet to meet and exceed the state minimum living level when combined with federal food stamp assistance. The Maryland state minimum living level (MLL) is the minimum standard of living for a family, based on a household size of three. The Governor must include in his annual budget enough funding for the TCA program that, when combined with federal food stamp benefits, is equal to at least sixty-one percent of the state MLL.

The Conference frequently advocates for the protection of social safety net programs included in the state budget to promote the common good in Maryland. Given budget challenges that may arise in coming fiscal years, it is especially important now to evaluate how current funding is or is not meeting the needs of all programs and how they grow in its capacity to assist Marylanders. Without adequate funding for programs and grants like TCA, vulnerable Marylanders will face additional obstacles to self-sufficiency due to their inability to meet their basic needs. Increasing TCA will allow the program to be stabilized and grow proportional to the needs of its recipients.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 559.