



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 6, 2020

HB 46

**Motor Vehicle Administration – Authority to Suspend Registration for Violations
Recorded by Traffic Control Signal Monitoring Systems - Repeal**

House Environment and Transportation 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 46 prohibits the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) from suspending a person’s vehicle registration due to the nonpayment of a traffic control signal monitoring system, or red light camera, violation.

The Conference routinely supports legislative efforts to decriminalize poverty, especially when those who are charged with the crimes are disproportionately low-income and unable to avoid the subsequent consequences associated with, though not always comparative to, the committal of the crime. House Bill 46 aims to tackle some of those consequences, specifically the tailspin that can occur if a person is unable to pay a fine associated with a red light camera violation. These consequences could include spiraling into further debt or the loss of transportation options to and from work, education, or family obligations if a person’s registration is suspended. House Bill 46 aims to keep those unable to pay fines – disproportionately those who are low-income or living at, close to, or below the poverty line – away from harsher punishments such as the suspension of vehicle registration, which is a seemingly unequal and unjust punishment for being poor.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 46.