



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**SB 150**

**Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults**

**House Government & Operations 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.

Senate Bill 150 requires the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, beginning January 1, 2023, and subject to certain limitations, to provide certain dental care for adults whose annual income is at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level; and repealing certain provisions of law requiring the implementation of a pilot program to provide limited dental coverage to adult recipients under the Program.

The Catholic Church has a strong interest in ensuring access to quality, affordable, and life-giving health care for all. As such, the Conference supports expanding access to health care options for those who need it, as every person has a basic right to adequate health care arising from the Church’s teaching on the sanctity and dignity of human life.

Senate Bill 150 aims to achieve this lofty goal in Maryland. Dental care is an important part of an individual’s overall physical health, and providing it for those who are less likely to be able to afford it is central to maintaining a person’s wellbeing and advancing their health. It also closes a crucial gap for those who are unable to afford dental services, most often the vulnerable and poverty-stricken in our communities. Providing even limited dental coverage will not only improve overall health, but also open doors by way of job opportunities and other societal benefits.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, urges you to support Senate Bill 150.