



**March 15, 2023**

**House Bill 1244 – Holocaust Remembrance Day**

**House Health & Government Operations Committee**

**FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

HB 1244 would require the Governor to annually proclaim January 27<sup>th</sup> as Maryland Holocaust Remembrance Day. A day of reflection, recollection, and education to remember the human tragedy of the Holocaust is something the State of Maryland must do.

On a recent International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Pope Francis reflected on his visit to the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz in Poland and remarked that *"If we lose our memory, we destroy our future. May the anniversary of the unspeakable cruelty that humanity learned of...serve as a summons to pause, to be still and to remember. We need to do this, lest we become indifferent."*

We are living in a time that is seeing the reemergence of antisemitism, antisemitic rhetoric both online and in-person, and attacks on Jewish individuals, homes and institutions. As a State and society, we must do everything in our power to firmly condemn every form of anti-Semitism. A day of remembrance is a step in the right direction to ensure that future generations never forget this tragedy and work to break down misunderstandings and hostility.

We respectfully request a favorable report on HB 1244.