



**MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE**

February 15, 2024

HB 717

Income Tax – Credit for Employers Providing Parental Engagement Leave

House Ways & Means Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers this testimony in support of House Bill 717. The 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.

House Bill 717 aims to provide employers with a tax credit for offering parental engagement leave to qualified employees during the taxable year.

Fostering a strong connection between parents and their children is a social imperative and the MCC recognizes the sacred and fundamental role that parents play in the upbringing and development of their children. The bonds formed within families are crucial foundations for a harmonious and morally grounded society. This legislation promotes the active involvement of parents in their children's lives through parental engagement leave.

This bill not only acknowledges the importance of the parent-child relationship but also encourages employers to support their employees in balancing work and family responsibilities. The tax credit serves as an incentive for businesses to adopt family-friendly policies, contributing to the overall well-being of both employees and their families.

By acknowledging and accommodating the needs of working parents, we contribute to building a society that values the core principles of our faith. This legislation has the potential to strengthen families, fortify our communities, and is important to fostering a society where the sacred bond between parents and children is revered and nurtured.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 717.