



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 12, 2025

HB386

**Pesticides - PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions
Health and Government Operations Committee**

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) 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 386 is legislation aimed at prohibiting the sale and use of pesticides containing PFAS chemicals. This legislation aligns closely with the values of care for creation and the protection of human health and dignity, which are central to Catholic teachings on environmental justice.

Pesticides containing PFAS chemicals pose significant risks to both human health and the environment. These toxic substances have been linked to a myriad of adverse health effects, including cancer, reproductive harm, and immune system disorders. PFAS chemicals are notorious for their persistence in the environment, contaminating soil, water sources, and wildlife, thereby threatening the delicate balance of ecosystems and jeopardizing biodiversity.

Pope Francis, in his encyclical "Laudato Si'," calls upon all people of goodwill to recognize the interconnectedness of ecological, social, and economic concerns and to work together towards the common good. This legislation reflects the spirit of "Laudato Si'" by addressing not only environmental degradation but also issues of public health and social justice, particularly for communities disproportionately affected by environmental pollution.

By supporting this legislation, we are standing in solidarity with those who suffer the consequences of environmental degradation and working towards a more just and sustainable future for all. I urge you to uphold the principles of environmental stewardship and human dignity by supporting this important legislation.

The MCC appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a favorable report for **House Bill 386**.