



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**March 13, 2020**

**House Bill 1321**

**Health - Abortion – Ultrasound and Waiting Period**

**House Health and Government Operations Committee**

**Position: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the mutual public-policy interests of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, including the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. We offer this testimony in support of House Bill 1321.

HB 1321 would prohibit a physician from performing or inducing an abortion on a pregnant woman within 24 hours after the woman receives certain ultrasound imaging. Giving a woman the ability, if she chooses, to see an ultrasound image and hear the fetal heartbeat and have time to consider this information, is a needed process for a woman to make an informed decision.

Women need information and time to consider the information; it's part of the informed consent process. To deny women the choice of seeing an ultrasound image or hearing a fetal heartbeat would be denying them vital information that they need to make a truly informed consent regarding an abortion. This bill is about arming women with information vital to their decision whether to continue their pregnancy. Please give all women the chance to make a truly informed decision.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on House Bill 1321.