



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 17, 2021

HB0061

Environment – Statewide Green Business Certification Program – Establishment

Senate Environment and Transportation 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.

House Bill 61 allows the Department of the Environment to establish and administer a statewide green business certification program; requiring the green business certification program to recognize businesses operating in a way that reduces their environmental footprint and to provide consumers with information on how to identify those businesses. Additionally, requiring the Department to update and enhance the statewide green business certification program in consultation with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program.

In his encyclical, *On Care for Our Common Home (Laudato Si’)*, Pope Francis tells us, “Whenever these questions are raised, some react by accusing others of irrationally attempting to stand in the way of progress and human development. But we need to grow in the conviction that a decrease in the pace of production and consumption can at times give rise to another form of progress and development. Efforts to promote a sustainable use of natural resources are not a waste of money, but rather an investment capable of providing other economic benefits in the medium term... We know how unsustainable is the behavior of those who constantly consume and destroy, while others are not yet able to live in a way worthy of their human dignity”.

House Bill 61 aims to address the much needed reforms to energy consumption policies and standards to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and hope they are a catalyst for meaningful ecological policy reform.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 61.