



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 3, 2022

SB 875

**Discrimination in Housing – Citizenship, Immigration Status, and National Origin**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings 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.

Senate Bill 875 states the policy of the State to provide fair housing, regardless of certain citizenship or immigration status; prohibiting certain discrimination related to the sale or rental of a dwelling on the basis of citizenship or immigration status, subject to certain exceptions; prohibiting a person from inquiring about a person's citizenship, immigration status, or national origin in connection with the rental of a dwelling

The Conference supports legislation that recognizes decent, safe, and affordable housing is a human right. Catholic teaching supports the right to private property, but recognizes that communities and the government have an obligation to ensure the housing needs of all are met, especially poor and vulnerable people and their families. In a time of rising homelessness and when many workers' wages are stagnant and living expenses are rising, it is important to ensure housing security. As stated in *Economic Justice for All: A Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* “Personal decisions, policies of private and public bodies, and power relationships must all be evaluated by their effects on those who lack the minimum necessities of nutrition, housing, education, and health care.”. Senate Bill 875 seeks to prohibit discrimination in housing of our immigrant communities within Maryland.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 875.