



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 21, 2023

HB 460

Department of Housing and Community Development - Racial Equity Impact Assessment

House Environment & Transportation Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland 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 460 would require the Department of Housing and Community Development, by December 31, 2024 and each year thereafter, to complete a racial equity impact assessment evaluating the impact of financial assistance administered by the Department and whether the assistance is equitably invested in the communities with the greatest need and those with the largest population of economically marginalized peoples; and requiring the Department to work with independent experts on the assessment and to make the assessment available to the public.

The Conference supports legislation that recognizes the dignity of the human person in pursuit of the common good. Equitable housing plans that help create a sustainable and economically viable region while assisting the housing needs of the community, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, can be extremely beneficial. 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." House Bill 460 seeks to identify the need for more equitable housing in the state of Maryland by analyzing the needs of our most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 460.

