



February 14, 2023

SB 315

Housing Innovation Pilot Program and Housing Innovation Fund - Establishment (Housing Innovation Pilot Program Act of 2023)

Senate Education, Energy, & Environment Committee

Position: Support

The 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.

Senate Bill 315 establishes the Housing Innovation Pilot Program in the Department of Housing and Community Development to provide funds for certain mixed-income, cross-subsidized housing and to create opportunities to increase the volume of housing production and establishes the Housing Innovation Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund to be used only to provide low- or no-interest loans to local housing authorities.

The Catholic bishops believe 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 for our most vulnerable populations.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for Senate Bill 315.