



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 22, 2023

HB 454

Health Occupations - Licenses, Certificates, and Registrations – Immigrants

House Health & Government Operations 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.

Senate Bill 454 prohibits a health occupations board from denying a license, certification, or registration to an immigrant if the individual meets the relevant educational, training, or professional requirements for the profession. The bill defines "immigrant" as an individual (1) whose country of origin is a country other than the United States; (2) who is not a citizen of the United States; and (3) who is a Maryland resident. The bill also authorizes the use of an individual taxpayer identification number for licensing purposes by specifying that each health occupations board must require each applicant for a license to disclose the applicant's Social Security number (as required under current law) or individual taxpayer identification number and making other related changes under the Family Law Article.

The Catholic Catechism instructs the faithful that good government has two duties, both of which must be carried out and neither of which can be ignored. The first duty is to welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person. Persons have the right to immigrate and thus government must accommodate this right to the greatest extent possible, especially financially blessed nations: *"The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him."* Catholic Catechism, 2241. Therefore, the Conference strongly supports legislation that supports the dignity of immigrants and their families.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for House Bill 454.

