



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

SB 806

**Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and Maryland Department of Health - Health Care Coverage for Undocumented Immigrants - Report**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

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 806 requiring the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and the Maryland Department of Health to develop a report comparing options for offering affordable health care coverage to State residents who are ineligible for the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, the Maryland Children's Health Program, or qualified health plans due to the individuals' immigration status.

In Maryland, over 275,000 undocumented immigrants are ineligible for care through the Maryland Health Exchange. Multiple states have established comprehensive care programs to extend coverage to immigrants regardless of their immigration status. This has had the highest impact on Black and Latino residents, who have become sicker, hospitalized at higher rates, and die younger as they are forced to face life or death situations due to their exclusion in essential programs.

Senate Bill 806 would identify healthcare disparities for immigrant communities in Maryland and form a study on providing health care coverage to undocumented immigrants in the pursuit of a common good.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and respectfully urges a **favorable** report for Senate Bill 806.