



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 15, 2024

House Bill 606
Sales and Use Tax – Baby Products – Exemption
House Ways and Means Committee

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) 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 606 seeks to expand the exemption from sales and use tax for the sale of certain baby products to include certain toilet training and child safety items, furniture, strollers, textiles, foods, and baby monitors.

Approximately 30.5% of infants in Maryland come from households with incomes below twice the federal poverty line, indicating a varied economic landscape for the state's youngest residents.¹ Many of these families face financial strain when purchasing essential items for their infants, such as strollers, cribs, and baby formula. Expanding the exemption from sales and use tax for these items would not only enhance safety and well-being but also contribute to a more equitable economy by easing the financial burden on families.

Assisting families in acquiring necessary goods for their children not only promotes safer households but also supports healthy development. The Conference, dedicated to upholding life-affirming initiatives, advocates for extending tax credits to families, enabling them to afford essential products for their children's well-being. This initiative addresses the urgent needs of Maryland families during crucial periods, ensuring that no parent has to worry about providing necessities for their infants and toddlers. Encouraging families to provide essential items for their children's development contributes to creating healthy and safe homes.

For these reasons, the MCC asks for a favorable report on **HB 606**.

Thank you for your consideration.

¹[https://stateofbabies.org/pdfs/states/Maryland%20\(MD\)%20%20State%20of%20Babies%20Yearbook%202023.pdf](https://stateofbabies.org/pdfs/states/Maryland%20(MD)%20%20State%20of%20Babies%20Yearbook%202023.pdf)