



**March 19, 2025**

**Senate Bill 156**

**Workgroup on Universal Newborn Nurse Home Visiting Services - Establishment  
House Health and Government Operations 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.

**Senate Bill 156** establishes the Workgroup on Universal Newborn Nurse Home Visiting Services; requiring the Workgroup to compile updated patient data and expenditure per patient from the Family Connect Programs, compare other maternal and newborn health programs in the State and in other states, and identify service gaps and potential funding sources to close the gaps; and requiring the Workgroup to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2025.

This workgroup is a critical first step in identifying and addressing gaps in services that support newborns and their families. The legislation aims to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs, such as Family Connects, and identify funding sources to expand and enhance services where needed.<sup>1</sup> By doing so, it seeks to ensure that families receive the support necessary to improve health outcomes for both parents and newborns while fostering self-sufficiency.

Through this initiative, the workgroup can uncover areas where additional resources and services are needed—potentially making a life-saving difference for vulnerable newborns and struggling new mothers. It is essential that the workgroup safeguards patient data and ensures that participation in the study or any future services does not lead to unintended negative consequences, such as unnecessary family separation. By examining service feasibility and impact, Maryland is taking a proactive step toward strengthening families and investing in the long-term health, safety, and well-being of its youngest residents.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 156**.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.familytreemd.org/fcm/>

Thank you for your consideration.