



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 4th 2026

HB220

**Environment - Water - Individual Unit Meters
Environment and Transportation
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 220**. 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.

House Bill 220 authorizes apartment complexes and certain dwelling units to install individual water meters, so residents are billed only for the water they personally use. It prohibits property owners or contractors from passing installation costs to tenants and requires leak detection monitoring within each meter. It also mandates maintaining proper records to ensure transparency and consumer protection.

Individual metering promotes fairness, conservation, and accountability in multi-unit housing. By allowing tenants to pay only for the water they personally use, this policy provides families with greater control over their monthly expenses and encourages responsible consumption. Leak-detection features also help prevent costly water damage and preserve valuable resources. Importantly, the bill ensures that landlords cannot shift installation or maintenance costs onto tenants—protecting residents who are already financially vulnerable. At a time when housing affordability is at an all-time concern, we must take proactive steps to protect renters from unexpected charges while also preventing property damage that could lead to further instability.

Upholding justice and equity for tenants, particularly those with limited financial means, reflects our commitment to supporting the most economically insecure among us. This bill offers a practical approach that strengthens accountability—ensuring that each resident is responsible for their own water usage—while also increasing transparency between property owners and tenants. The environmental benefits are equally important: when individuals can see and understand their personal consumption, they are more likely to conserve water, contributing to stewardship of our natural resources and the well-being of future generations.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 220**.