



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 5, 2026

**HB 278**

**Human Services - Department of Aging and Commission on Aging (The Longevity Ready Maryland Act)**

**House Health Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of House Bill 278. 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.

House Bill 278, the Longevity Ready Maryland Act, seeks to codify the "Longevity Ready Maryland (LRM) Plan," a comprehensive, multisector initiative designed to address the needs of Maryland's growing older adult population. By focusing on building a longevity ecosystem, promoting economic opportunity, and optimizing health and wellness, this legislation ensures that our state is prepared to support its residents as they age with dignity and purpose.

The Conference supports this bill as a means toward supporting the dignity of human persons, especially as they age. Older persons are often marginalized in a "throwaway culture." As Pope Francis reminds us in *Fratelli Tutti*, "by isolating the elderly and leaving them in the care of others without the closeness and concern of family members, we disfigure and impoverish the family itself. We also end up depriving young people of a necessary connection to their roots and a wisdom that the young cannot achieve on their own." This legislation honors that closeness by creating a framework that supports both older adults and their caregivers.

The Longevity Ready Maryland Plan would help ensure that aging is not seen as a burden but as a vital stage of life that contributes to the common good. Moreover, the expansion of the Commission on Aging ensures that the implementation of this plan remains grounded in the real-world needs of Marylanders. This collaborative approach reflects the spirit of solidarity, where all sectors of society work together to ensure that no one is marginalized as they age.

For these reasons, the Conference respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 278.