



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 26, 2020

**SB 638  
Maryland Child Tax Credit**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Position: Support**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

Senate Bill 638 creates a refundable tax credit against the State income tax for up to \$500 per child who is either under six generally or under seventeen with a disability for those who have a federal adjusted gross income of \$6,000 or less annually.

The Church has long supported legislation such as Child Tax Credits that provides dignity for workers and their families and bills that aim to “expand assistance to parents with children, and improve family formation and stability.” (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops *Letter to Congress on Child Tax Credit*, 3/16/2016) *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* further clarifies that all persons deserve “a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently... There can be several different ways to make a family wage a concrete reality. Various forms of important social provisions help to bring it about, for example, family subsidies and other contributions for dependent family members...” Establishing a Child Tax Credit in Maryland is one significant and tangible way to achieve this family stability for low-income families throughout the state.

Child Tax Credits have been proven as effective anti-poverty tools, aiming to eliminate the need for families to make the impossible and unnecessary choice between financial stability and family stability. Although a \$6,000 income cap is a seemingly low limit, those who are eligible to claim the credit will notice immediate and substantial financial relief. Providing this relief to those who may be the fiscally poorest among us is a noble and notable place to start. The Conference strongly and enthusiastically supports legislation that addresses this need, such as the creation of Child Tax Credits and the expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit, and looks forward to continuing to do so as an extremely effective and proven tool in combatting poverty.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 638.