



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 19, 2020

SB 926

Climate Solutions Act of 2020 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act

**Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
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 926 aims to reduce the State’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction by 60% of 2006 levels by 2030, eventually reaching net-zero by 2045. The Conference has historically held a strong interest in environmental policy, and as such supports comprehensive environmental legislation that recognizes the integral ecosystem in which we live.

In his encyclical, *On Care for Our Common Home (Laudato Si’)*, Pope Francis tells us, “when we speak of the ‘environment’, what we really mean is a relationship existing between nature and the society which lives in it. Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. Recognizing the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behaviour patterns, and the ways it grasps reality. Given the scale of change, it is no longer possible to find a specific, discrete answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”

Senate Bill 926 aims to address the much needed reforms to energy consumption policies and standards to be set to sustain and achieve a healthy global ecosystem. We encourage discussion around the components and goals outlined in this legislation and pray they are a catalyst for meaningful ecological policy reform.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, urges you to support Senate Bill 926.