



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**January 27, 2021**

**HB 15  
Governor's Office of Immigrant Affairs**

**House Appropriations 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.

House Bill 15 would establish the Governor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to create a network of neighborhood-based centers providing immigrant services, assist immigrants in certain matters, assist law enforcement in combatting crimes against immigrants, and promote civic and economic participation among immigrant communities; requiring the Director to submit a certain report to the Governor and the General Assembly by June 15 each year describing calls received by the Office, the number of immigrants assisted and all other relevant information

The Catholic Catechism instructs the faithful that good government has two duties, both of which must be carried out and neither of which can be ignored. The first duty is to welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person. Persons have the right to immigrate and thus government must accommodate this right to the greatest extent possible, especially financially blessed nations: *"The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him."* Catholic Catechism, 2241. Therefore, the Conference strongly supports legislation that supports the dignity of immigrants and their families.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 15.