

Health Care for the Homeless - HB 189 - FAV - Mobi

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Position: FAV

**HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY
IN SUPPORT OF
HB 189 – Mobile Laundry for the Homeless Pilot Program –
Established**

**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 16, 2021**



Health Care for the Homeless supports HB 189, which would establish the Mobile Laundry for the Homeless Pilot Program within the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to assist nonprofit organizations in providing mobile laundry services for people experiencing homelessness.

There are a number of services people who are stably housed take for granted that are not afforded to our neighbors without homes. Showers are one.¹ Clean laundry is another. Imagine having to face the Baltimore heat and humidity without a place to clean your clothes after being outside all day. For many of our clients, that is a reality. With this bill, our neighbors without homes will be able to be provided clean clothing – one more way that our clients can experience the dignity and respect they deserve. A mobile laundry unit can be a place to enjoy something most of us take for granted - a place to clean their clothing in peace.

As people who experience homelessness transition to stable housing and find permanent homes, it is important that they be provided dignity and safety in the process. The ability to be provided clean and fresh clothes is one such way to help accomplish that. As such, we urge a favorable report on this bill.

Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland's leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We work to prevent and end homelessness for vulnerable individuals and families by providing quality, integrated health care and promoting access to affordable housing and sustainable incomes through direct service, advocacy, and community engagement. We deliver integrated medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, and housing support services for over 10,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. For more information, visit www.hchmd.org.

¹ See Health Care for the Homeless partnership with Generosity Global, available at <https://www.hchmd.org/news/generosity-global-brings-free-shower-services-baltimore>.

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ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 16, 2021

HB 189

Mobile Laundry for the Homeless Pilot Program

Senate Education, Health, and Environment 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 189 establishes the Mobile Laundry for the Homeless Pilot Program in the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization to provide funds to nonprofit organizations to establish or expand mobile laundry services for the homeless; requiring the Division to award funds through certain grants to establish certain mobile laundry services; requiring the Department of Housing and Community Development to evaluate the effectiveness of the Pilot Program and make recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 15, 2024.

Pope Francis tells us, “We have forgotten and are still forgetting that over and above business, logic and the parameters of the market is the human being; and that something is men and women in as much as they are human beings by virtue of their profound dignity: to offer them the possibility of living a dignified life and of actively participating in the common good”. House Bill 189 is a step in the right direction for living a dignified life and the pursuit of a common good within today’s society.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and urges you for a favorable report on House Bill 189.