



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**March 2, 2021**

**HB 1175**

**Property Tax Credit for Disabled Veterans – Established**

**House Ways and Means 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 1175 establishes a property tax credit system that allows disabled veterans to receive property tax credits on their home to match their level of disability. Currently, under state law we are operating on an absolute basis, under which a disabled veteran in Maryland may receive a full property tax exemption on their primary residence if the veteran is 100% disabled as a result of service. However, if they are presumed less than 100% disabled, they are receiving no tax credit. House Bill 1175 allows for a veteran to secure a tax credit that is in direct correlation with the percentage of their disability.

In a Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities it is stated *“Defense of the right to life, then, implies the defense of other rights that enable the disabled individual to achieve the fullest measure of personal development of which he or she is capable. These include the right to equal opportunity in education, in employment, in housing, as well as the right to free access to public accommodations, facilities, and services.”*

House Bill 1175 seeks to address the respect for the dignity and physical integrity of the human person; working to protect and help the veterans and their families who have bravely fought and served our state and country. Veterans experiencing a mental or physical disability are among the most marginalized and underserved in our society. The Catholic Church through its parishes, charities and other ministries reaches out pastorally to those struggling with physical or mental disabilities.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 1175.