



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 3, 2021

Senate Bill 399
Maryland Transit Administration – Disabled Reduced Fare Program for
Opioid Treatment Program Patients – Modifications

Senate Finance Committee

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Catholic 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, which together encompass over one million Marylanders.

Senate Bill 399 would allow opioid treatment centers to issue ID cards and metro passes to patients so they can receive the Disabled Reduced Fare for public transit.

The Conference supports legislation that ensures access to quality, affordable, and life-giving health care for all. Every person has a basic right to adequate health care arising from the Church's teaching on the sanctity and dignity of human life. Mental and behavioral health is integral to the health of the entire person, and services that treat substance use disorders are imperative to a healthy society.

Approximately 1 in 10 individuals prescribed an opioid will develop an opioid use disorder (*National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2020*). The opioid crisis has dramatically intensified the need for services in Maryland that aid in recovery and healing. As such, providing reduced public transit fare and ID cards through opioid treatment centers will help patients travel to and from treatment, be successful in recovery and build a healthy, productive lifestyle.

For these reasons, the Conference appreciates your consideration and urges an unfavorable report on **Senate Bill 399**.