



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

February 08, 2022

HB 253

Unemployment Insurance – Federal Extended Benefits for Long–Term Unemployment

House Economic Matters 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 253 would alter the period that constitutes an extended benefit period and when a State "on" indicator exists; specifying the total amount of certain extended unemployment benefits that are payable to an eligible individual; authorizing the Secretary of Labor, if authorized by federal law, to suspend the payment of certain extended unemployment benefits; and establishing that federal unemployment law provisions and definitions related to extended benefits apply to a certain extent.

The Maryland Catholic Conferences supports policies that protect human life and dignity, strengthen families, encourage and reward work, preserve a safety net for the vulnerable, and build public/private partnerships to overcome poverty. Federal policies should form a "Circle of Protection" around programs that serve poor and vulnerable people in our communities and avoid placing additional burdens on people and families struggling to live in dignity. House Bill 253 seeks to preserve a safety net for our most vulnerable by ensuring that unemployed Marylanders receive additional weeks of unemployment benefits during an economic downturn.

For these reasons, the Conference appreciates your consideration and urges a favorable report on House Bill 253.