



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**January 27, 2022**

**HB 142**

**Health Insurance – Coverage of In Vitro Fertilization - Revisions**

**House Health & Government Operations Committee**

**Position: OPPOSE**

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.

The Conference is opposed to HB 142 as currently drafted. Maryland has long recognized the need to protect religious beliefs and practices of individuals and religious organizations. This bill removes the section of law (*please see page 5 lines 4-8*) that currently offers protection to a religious organization regarding their bona fide religious beliefs and practices by stating that: ***“Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, if the coverage required under this section conflicts with the bona fide religious beliefs and practices of a religious organization, on request of the religious organization, an entity subject to this section shall exclude the coverage otherwise required under this section in a policy or contract with the religious organization.”***

The Maryland Catholic Conference respectfully asks that this section of the bill **not** be removed from current law. The respect and protection of differences in belief and practice when it comes to health care should continue to be a principal Maryland upholds.

It is for these reasons that the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for an unfavorable report for **HB 142**. Thank you for your consideration.