



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

**February 01, 2022**

**HB 181**

**Declaration of Rights – Religious Freedom, Religious Tests, and Oaths and Affirmations -  
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 181. This bill proposes a constitutional amendment which would remove references to God from certain provisions relating to religious freedom, religious tests and oaths and affirmations.

According to data from Pew Research Center<sup>1</sup> 69% of adults in Maryland identify as Christian and 64% are absolute and certain regarding their belief in God while an additional 18% are fairly certain regarding their belief in God. Additionally, 77% of all Marylanders associate with a particular religion or belief tradition. We ask that Maryland’s constitution continue to reflect the belief of the majority of Marylanders and that HB 181 receive an unfavorable report. In his inaugural address President Kennedy spoke about the rights of all Americans remarking that these rights *“come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.”*

It is for these reasons that the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for an unfavorable report for **HB 181**. Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> [Adults in Maryland - Religion in America: U.S. Religious Data, Demographics and Statistics | Pew Research Center \(pewforum.org\)](https://www.pewforum.org)