



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

The Maryland Episcopal
Public Policy
Network

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0555
The Maryland the Beautiful Act
****FAVORABLE****

TO: Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee; Senator Melony Griffith, Chair, Senator Katherine Klausmeier, Vice-Chair, and members of the Finance Committee
FROM: Rev. Linda K. Boyd, Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland
DATE: March 2, 2023

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland strongly supports this bill. Families today are struggling. Times are difficult with increased prices of virtually everything that a family needs to survive and thrive. We are concerned about their struggle, as a people of faith who believe that each person is a beloved child of God. They need our help.

The annual inflation rate in the United States in January 2023 was 6.4%. The cost of shelter increased faster (7.9%) as did the cost of energy (8.7%). Maryland's minimum wage increased to \$13.25 on 1/1/2023, and is scheduled to reach \$14 on 1/1/2024. This amount is insufficient for a family to exist, much less thrive. Given these economic pressures, families are at risk of inadequate nutrition, heat, and housing. This bill is an important step toward helping low-income families to provide for necessities of life. This is an important step toward assisting such families and will thus benefit the entire community.

The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable outcome for this bill.

4 E UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, BALTIMORE, MD 21218-2437
TEL: 410-467-1399 / 800-443-1399 FAX: 410-554-6387
WWW.EPISCOPALMARYLAND.ORG