



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 2, 2023

HB 28

Income Tax – Credit for Caregivers of Senior Family Members

House Ways and Means Committee

Position: Favorable

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state’s second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

House Bill 28 allows a credit against the State income tax for qualified expenses paid or incurred by a taxpayer during the taxable year in caring for a qualified senior family member. The bill defines a, “qualified senior family member” as an individual who is at least 60 years of age, a relative of the taxpayer, and resides on the same property as the taxpayer’s permanent place of residence for at least 6 months of the taxable year.

House Bill 28 allows a taxpayer who cares for a qualified senior family member an income tax credit for certain qualified expenses. Qualified expenses mean expenses paid or incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year for the purchase, lease, or rental of tangible personal property or services acquired for the benefit of a qualified senior family member that (1) Are provided by an organization or an individual who IS NOT a relative of the taxpayer or qualified senior family member; and (2) Are necessary to enable the qualified senior family member to stay at the taxpayer’s abode in the State; OR (3) Assist the taxpayer in providing care and support to the qualified senior family member. Qualified expenses include various types of care, including, but not limited to, adult day care, homemaker care, personal care attendance services, health care equipment and supplies, or home modification services, or services necessary to provide care and support to a qualified senior family member in connection with two or more daily living activities. Proof of medical necessity signed by a physician or nurse practitioner licensed in specific jurisdictions must state that the taxpayer provided assistance to the qualified senior family member with at least three of the following activities.

(a) bathing and grooming; (b) dressing and undressing; (c) meal preparation and feeding; (d) functional transfers; (e) safe restroom use and assistance with continence; (f) ambulation; (g) memory care and stimulation.

The rising cost of healthcare and the cost of living increasing has resulted in many Seniors being unable to reside in their homes. Seniors often have to decide between remaining in their homes or receiving adequate healthcare. Many seniors live on a severely fixed income, and because of this many seniors have to move out of their homes. According to the Genworth Cost of Care Survey 2021 the average Senior receives 44 hours of home care per week, 176 hours of care per month at an average rate of \$26 per hour in Maryland. The average family spends \$4601 per month on in-home senior care based on the survey.¹ Furthermore, because of the rising cost of healthcare, many seniors cannot afford the proper healthcare they need. Relatives often want to help their family-members, but because of the high financial cost involved, they cannot do so. This bill attempts to find a helpful solution to all of these challenges by allowing a taxpayer who cares for a qualified senior family member, an income tax credit for qualified expenses. This tax credit will help family members take care of their relatives, as family members will receive help to do so. The Maryland Catholic Conference supports legislation that helps individuals take care of others.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 28**. Thank you for your consideration.

¹ <https://familychoicehealthcare.com/blog/how-much-does-maryland-in-home-senior-care-cost>