



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 6, 2024

Senate Bill 975

**Public Safety - Reproductive Health Care Clinic Security Grant Program -
Establishment (Protecting Reproductive Health Care Clinics Act)
Senate Finance Committee**

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) 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.

Senate Bill 975 establishes the Reproductive Health Care Clinic Security Grant Program in the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services to assist reproductive health care clinics in the State with costs associated with security improvements and safety operational expenses; and authorizing the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$500,000 to the Program.

The state ranks among the top in the percentage of the population that undergoes abortions, and Maryland taxpayers already contribute millions in taxes toward providing abortions for others. Taxpayers should not bear the responsibility of providing security funding for a facility. If the state allocates funds to reproductive health care clinics, it should also allocate an equivalent amount to pregnancy centers to enhance support.

Women deserve more than just access to abortion. They require support and services that affirm their worth and emphasize the sanctity of the life they carry in their womb. As a society, it is concerning when the default response to any pregnancy is fear rather than joy. It is crucial for us to do better by walking with mothers in need and addressing the economic, social, racial, employment, and emotional barriers that may lead them to believe abortion is the only option. As Pope Francis reminds us, "All life has inestimable value, even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn, and the poor."¹ The Catholic Conference actively works to ensure the protection of life from conception to natural death.

¹ <https://www.ncronline.org/news/vatican/pope-elderly-sick-unborn-poor-are-masterpieces-gods-creation>

For these reasons, the MCC asks for an unfavorable report on **SB 975**.

Thank you for your consideration.