



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 15, 2024

House Bill 1233
Public Health – Abortion
House Health and Government Operations Committee

Position: Favorable

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.

House Bill 1233 requires that an abortion be performed by a physician, rather than a qualified provider; repealing certain provisions of law related to State interference with an abortion, regulations related to abortion, and liability or criminal punishment for physicians who perform an abortion; prohibiting a physician from knowingly performing, inducing, or attempting to perform or induce an abortion under certain circumstances and subject to certain exceptions; etc.

This bill addresses issues such as testing, informed consent, and recordkeeping requirements which are consistent with common-sense abortion regulations. House Bill 1233 also attempts to secure additional protection for unborn children, namely, those whose hearts have begun to beat. The presence of a heartbeat at 6-8 weeks' gestation correlated with a live birth rate of 98% in normal pregnancies without intervention.¹ By calling a halt to the intentional taking of innocent human lives with beating hearts, the prohibition section of the bill calls upon the courts to allow states to provide a level of protection for unborn children against abortion that is more consistent with basic human dignity.

For these reasons, the MCC asks for a favorable report on **HB 1233**.

Thank you for your consideration.

¹ <https://lozierinstitute.org/fact-sheet-fetal-survival-and-risk-of-pregnancy-loss/>