



**Delaware-Maryland Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony prepared for the  
**Ways and Means Committee**  
on  
**House Bill 608**  
February 8, 2024  
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of sufficient livelihood all. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; a faith community with three synods in every part of the Maryland.

Our community teaches that adequate income, public support for sufficient livelihood, and appropriately progressive taxation are benchmarks for a just public policy ["Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All," ELCA, 1999]. Under that position we have supported Maryland's earned income tax credit and its expansion for several decades.

**House Bill 608** adds another increment of eligibility to what has been a bipartisan policy that has raised low-income individuals out of poverty. We believe that outcome speaks for itself. Indexing thresholds to account for cost rise is also a fair way to keep a floor under wages.

We ask a favorable report.

Lee Hudson