



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

January 29th, 2025

SB 237

Affordable Housing Payment In Lieu of Taxes Expansion Act
Budget and Taxation Committee
Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 237. 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.

Senate Bill 237 would allow for property owners and county governments to establish agreements to reduce property tax payments if the property is used for rental housing and at least 50% of the units are maintained as affordable housing for a minimum of 15 years. The legislation aims to incentivize the creation and preservation of affordable housing by offering financial relief to property owners while addressing the growing housing affordability crisis. This legislation applies to taxable years beginning after June 30, 2025.

This legislation promotes the development and sustainability of affordable housing, benefiting low-income families, seniors, and individuals in need of stable housing. By ensuring that a significant portion of rental units remains affordable, the legislation addresses housing inequality and fosters economic stability for vulnerable populations. Additionally, it stimulates community development by encouraging investment in affordable housing projects, which can help revitalize neighborhoods, reduce homelessness, and create a stronger, more inclusive economy for the state.

Supporting legislation like this aligns with Catholic social teaching, which emphasizes the dignity of the human person, the preferential option for the poor, and the importance of the common good. Affordable housing is a fundamental human need and an essential component of social justice. By taking a foundational approach to this issue, we are helping all Marylanders advocate for better housing legislation for the flourishing of all members of society.

The MCC appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on **Senate Bill 237**.