

# **Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB519.pdf**

Uploaded by: Diane Arias

Position: FAV



**February 28, 2025**

**Senate Bill 519  
Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program and Fund - Establishment  
Senate Finance 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.

**Senate Bill 519** establishes the Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program to provide grants to improve awareness of and access to prostate cancer care services for individuals in the State; establishing the Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund to provide grants under the Program; requiring the Governor in each of fiscal years 2027 and 2028, to include an appropriation of \$100,000 for the program in the annual budget bill; and requiring that the interest earnings of the Fund be credited to the Fund.

Prostate cancer is a significant health concern, with approximately 135.7 out of every 100,000 Maryland men diagnosed in their lifetime and 19.7 per 100,000 dying from the disease.<sup>1</sup> Expanding access to life-saving treatment and increasing awareness are essential for ensuring early detection, which significantly improves treatment outcomes and reduces mortality rates. Funding prostate cancer awareness and access empowers men and their families with critical health information, enabling them to make informed decisions and take proactive steps in managing their well-being. As men age and prostate cancer risk increases, regular healthcare visits become even more important. However, financial barriers and geographic limitations often prevent adequate care. Ensuring access to screenings and treatment addresses these challenges while upholding the dignity of life through critical, potentially life-saving interventions.

Advocating for comprehensive, life-affirming healthcare policies is a moral responsibility. Prioritizing prostate cancer awareness and access can help save lives by ensuring timely

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<sup>1</sup> <https://zerocancer.org/about-prostate-cancer/downloadable-materials/state-statistics/maryland#:~:text=Incidence%20Rates,prostate%20cancer%20in%20their%20lifetime.>

diagnosis and reducing healthcare disparities. This legislation seeks to remove barriers to care, recognizing that early intervention is key to better health outcomes. Proactive investment in men's health strengthens families, communities, and overall public health.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 519**.

Thank you for your consideration.

# **SB 519 - CANCERCOUNCIL - FIN - LOC (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: UNF



February 28, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Finance Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: SB 519 Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program and Fund – Establishment**

Dear Chair Beidle:

The Maryland State Council on Cancer Control (the Council) is submitting this letter of concern for Senate Bill 519 (SB 519), titled: "Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program and Fund – Establishment." SB 519 would establish a dedicated Prostate Cancer Grant Program. While the Council recognizes the importance of addressing prostate cancer, we believe SB 519 presents several critical issues that warrant careful reconsideration.

**Duplication and Inefficiency:**

SB 519 risks duplicating existing and planned initiatives. Specifically:

- **SB 938 Mandate:** SB 938 (2024) mandates the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to develop a comprehensive public education campaign by December 1, 2026, addressing prostate, lung, and breast cancer in disproportionately impacted communities. Creating a separate prostate cancer grant program *before* this campaign is developed is inefficient and potentially redundant. A coordinated approach, integrating prostate cancer awareness into the SB 938 campaign, would be more effective.
- **Existing CPEST Programs:** Prostate cancer is already a targeted cancer within the MDH's Cancer Prevention, Education, Screening, and Treatment (CPEST) program. CPEST programs currently provide prostate cancer education, and can cover transportation costs (though this is currently at the discretion of each jurisdiction). In addition, it is the understanding of the Council that once the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) updates their prostate cancer screening guidelines, the CPEST program will look to update their internal clinical standards and permit programs to apply funds for prostate clinical services, provided there is sufficient funding through the Cigarette Restitution Fund (CRF). SB 519 appears to create an unnecessary parallel structure.

**Resource Allocation Concerns:**

The Council questions the prioritization of a dedicated prostate cancer grant program when other cancers, such as lung and breast cancer, also significantly impact the same communities. Focusing solely on prostate cancer may divert resources from these other prevalent cancers, hindering overall cancer prevention efforts. A more holistic approach, addressing all major cancers affecting these communities, would likely be more beneficial.



**Recommendations:**

The Council strongly recommends the following:

1. **Integrate, Don't Duplicate:** Instead of a standalone program, integrate prostate cancer awareness and access initiatives into the existing CPEST framework and the SB 938-mandated campaign. This leverages existing infrastructure, avoids duplication of effort, and ensures a more equitable distribution of resources.
2. **Strategic Alignment:** Delay further action on SB 519 until *after* the MDH completes the SB 938 public education campaign. This will allow for a coordinated and comprehensive approach to cancer prevention. Specifically, explore how SB 519's objectives can be met through the SB 938 campaign or by enhancing existing CPEST programs.
3. **Strengthen CPEST:** Enhance the current CPEST program to effectively address prostate cancer care access needs by:
  - o Protecting CRF funds to ensure the CPEST program can provide prostate cancer education and funds for transportation.
  - o Increasing funding within the CPEST program, by moving \$100,000 from a non-MDH line item under CRF (e.g., crop conversion, legal expenses) to the Cancer Prevention/Screening/Treatment M00 F0304, to support prostate cancer clinical services once the USPSTF updates its screening guidelines. This would ensure that resources are readily available to implement updated clinical standards.

The Council urges the Committee to carefully consider these concerns and recommendations. We believe that the proposed approach in SB 519 is inefficient and potentially detrimental to broader cancer control efforts. We advocate for a more strategic and integrated approach that maximizes existing resources and addresses the complex cancer burden facing Maryland communities.

As currently drafted, the Council respectfully recommends an unfavorable vote on SB 519. We urge the Committee to prioritize the critical public health programs already supported by the CRF, ensuring Maryland's continued commitment to a healthier future for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Celano, MD." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul Celano, MD  
Vice Chair,  
Maryland State Council on Cancer Control

# **SB 519 - FIN - PHPA -LOI.docx (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Meghan Lynch

Position: INFO



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 28, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle  
Chair, Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

**RE: Senate Bill (SB) 519 – Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program and Fund - Establishment – Letter of Information**

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of information regarding Senate Bill (SB) 519 – Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program and Fund - Establishment. SB 519 establishes the Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program, alongside a dedicated fund to enhance public awareness and access to prostate cancer care in Maryland. This program would provide grants to support public education on prostate cancer, assist with travel costs for individuals unable to access care locally, and fund other initiatives aimed at improving access to prostate cancer care. Additionally, the bill stipulates that the Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program Fund be a non-lapsing special fund, with the Governor required to allocate at least \$100,000 annually for the program in fiscal years 2026, 2027, and 2028.

The Department agrees that the objectives of SB519 are important, particularly in its focus on raising awareness and improving access to prostate cancer care; it is important to note that many of the goals outlined in this bill are already being addressed through existing efforts within the Department. Specifically, these efforts are aligned with SB 938/HB 1293 (2024) and the Cigarette Restitution Fund Cancer Prevention, Education, Screening, and Treatment Program (CRF-CPEST).

In accordance with SB 938/HB 1293 (2024), the Department is currently developing a three-year public education campaign targeting cancer prevention, which will focus on prostate, lung, and breast cancers. This campaign is specifically designed to reach communities that are disproportionately impacted by these cancers. The public education campaign is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2027, and will include prostate cancer-related awareness activities, which directly correspond to the objectives outlined in SB 519. Given that the education and outreach required by SB 519 will be encompassed within this broader public education framework, the establishment of the Prostate Cancer Care Access Grant Program may result in the redundancy of efforts, potentially leading to unnecessary administrative complexities and duplication of



resources. In addition, CRF-CPEST funds can be used to provide funding for prostate cancer educational outreach, public awareness activities, and transportation services for eligible clients, as prostate cancer is one of seven cancers targeted by CRF-CPEST.

While the goals of SB 519 are in alignment with the Department's objectives, the existing efforts through SB 938/HB 1293 (2024) and the CRF-CPEST program present a comprehensive and coordinated approach to addressing prostate cancer awareness and access to care. The Department remains fully committed to advancing these initiatives, which will effectively address the needs of Maryland residents without creating redundant programs.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at [sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov](mailto:sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'LH Scott', is positioned above the typed name.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary