



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 28, 2025

House Bill 1004

**Public Health - Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias - Information on
Prevalence and Treatment
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 1004 requires the Maryland Department of Health, in partnership with certain entities, to incorporate information regarding treatments approved by the Food and Drug Administration for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and to increase understanding and awareness of treatment of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias into relevant public health outreach programs administered by the Department.

Making informed, data-driven decisions is essential, especially when caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia who may no longer have full cognitive capacity to make their own medical choices. It is critical to provide the best possible care while respecting the dignity of individuals with degenerative cognitive conditions. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has recently approved Kisunla (donanemab-azbt), a treatment that has demonstrated significant reductions in clinical decline for Alzheimer's patients.¹ While there is still no cure for Alzheimer's, ongoing advancements in treatment can help preserve cognitive function and coherence, allowing families to share more meaningful moments with their loved ones.

Public awareness of these promising treatments is vital. Clear communication about FDA-approved medications enables families to consult healthcare providers about potential options for their loved ones. Additionally, the publication of data related to early detection, treatment outcomes, and public health trends can help families and healthcare professionals better understand the prevalence of Alzheimer's and make informed care decisions. Legislation that promotes the dissemination of this critical information can ensure that individuals with

¹ <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/news-events-human-drugs/fda-approves-treatment-adults-alzheimers-disease>

Alzheimer's receive the care they deserve while also helping to prevent instances of abuse or neglect. Regardless of cognitive state, every person has inherent dignity and ensuring access to the latest medical advancements that are developed with respect to life, is a fundamental aspect of their care.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 1004**.

Thank you for your consideration.