



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 10, 2025

House Bill 1481

**Disability Services - Adapted Vehicle Access Pilot Program – Established
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 1481 establishes the Adapted Vehicle Access Pilot Program to provide adapted vehicles to individuals who require a wheelchair for mobility; requiring the Department of Disabilities to implement and administer the Program, solicit certain donations for the Program, study the impacts of the Program, and report on the Program on or before December 1, 2028.

This program would expand access to adaptive vehicles for individuals with disabilities by leveraging charitable donations to offset costs, ensuring greater mobility and independence. Many individuals face financial barriers to acquiring adaptive technologies, which are essential for safe and accessible transportation. By prioritizing those in areas with limited public transit options, this initiative would provide life-changing mobility solutions while upholding rigorous safety and quality standards. With adaptive equipment ranging from \$50 for minor modifications to \$80,000 for fully equipped vehicles, this initiative would make essential transportation more attainable for those in need.¹

Rooted in the Catholic call for solidarity, this legislation affirms the inherent dignity of individuals with disabilities by ensuring they have the resources necessary to live with greater participation in society. The Church teaches that all people, regardless of ability, are created with equal worth and deserve access to the support and services that allow them to flourish. Providing adaptive mobility solutions is a moral obligation to uphold human dignity, ensuring that no one is left isolated due to financial or logistical barriers.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 1481**.

¹ <https://www.nhtsa.gov/vehicle-safety/adapted-vehicles#cost-savings-1486>

Thank you for your consideration.