



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

April 7, 2026

Senate Bill 420
Public Institutions of Higher Education - Pregnant and Parenting Students - Plan
and Reporting
House Appropriations 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 420 requires the Maryland Higher Education Commission to collect data regarding the parental status of students from each public institution of higher education in the State; and generally relating to pregnant and parenting students at public institutions of higher education.

In Maryland, nearly 70,000 students, constituting one-fifth of undergraduates, are parents.¹ Student parents, often older, financially independent, highly motivated, and achieving better grades than their dependent peers, face significant challenges. However, a notable disparity exists, with just 8% of single-mother undergraduates earning an A.A. or B.A. within six years of college enrollment, compared to 49% of non-mothers.²

Collecting demographic data on parenting status is essential to understanding the scope of need and ensuring that institutions connect student parents with existing resources. This data may also inform future decisions about providing safe and appropriate childcare options so parenting students can attend classes while caring for their children. Importantly, data collection enables the State to allocate funding more effectively to support parenting students. Maryland took an important step last year by passing SB 420 requiring public senior higher education institutions to adopt a plan regarding pregnant and parenting students to include

¹ <https://www.generationhope.org/our-stories/maryland-advocacy-student-parent-data-collection#:~:text=Based%20on%20national%20data%2C%20we,%2C%20data%20analysts%2C%20and%20policymakers.>

² <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Maryland.pdf>

referral to on-campus or off-campus services. The data collected under Senate Bill 420 builds on that progress by ensuring these policies are adequately funded and implemented. Pregnancy and parenting support services play a critical role in helping students succeed academically while raising families. Parenting students pursue higher education to secure better-paying careers, and adequate campus support is essential to ensure they can complete their degrees without sacrificing their parental responsibilities. When eligible, access to government subsidies and support services can further stabilize families and promote long-term success.

This legislation affirms the value of life welcomed by parenting students and strengthens institutional support to help parents raise healthy families while achieving educational attainment.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **SB 420**.

Thank you for your consideration.