

HB1246

Maryland Department of Health- Employment Training and Opportunity Database
Economic Matters Committee
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
March 4, 2026
Favorable

Catholic Charities of Baltimore supports HB1246, which requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to establish an Employment Training and Opportunity Database to assist individuals in Maryland in finding employment training and other opportunities that may enable them to become eligible for and maintain eligibility for the Maryland Medical Assistance Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The bill also requires MDH to assist individuals in enrolling in programs listed in the database and creates a process for other state agencies to recommend and forward appropriate programs for inclusion.

For over a century, [Catholic Charities](#) has provided care and services to improve the lives of Marylanders in need. We accompany Marylanders as they age with dignity, support their pursuit of employment and career advancement, heal from trauma and addiction, achieve independence, prepare for educational success, and welcome immigrant neighbors into Maryland communities.

Catholic Charities has long been engaged in workforce development and employment support through different programs, helping many toward stability and self-sufficiency. The Christopher Place Employment Academy supports men transitioning from homelessness to permanent, stable living through full-time employment. Our Daily Bread Employment Center and other workforce initiatives provide job readiness training, workforce development services, and practical supports that remove barriers to employment. Through these programs over the past year, 600 individuals have utilized workforce development services, 312 people have secured employment, and 82 have received an industry-recognized certification. Through holistic case management, industry-recognized training, and strong employer partnerships, we have seen our participants move from instability to economic mobility equipped not only for employment, but for long-term success.

House Bill 1246 makes strategic and efficient use of state resources as Maryland responds to federal changes to Medicaid eligibility. By establishing an Employment Training and Opportunity Database, the bill creates a centralized, accessible tool to connect individuals with employment training and support programs that can help them both achieve and maintain eligibility for Medicaid and SNAP. Importantly, the bill goes beyond simply listing opportunities, it requires enrollment assistance and creates a clear process for coordination across state agencies, ensuring individuals are not left to navigate complex requirements on their own. This approach will reduce the number of Marylanders who lose coverage simply because they lack timely information or support to remain compliant with Medicaid employment-related requirements.

Our experience demonstrates that “one-stop shop” models that integrate employment, education, and benefits supports are far more effective than fragmented systems. Holistic, hands-on assistance improves compliance, increases program engagement, and leads to better long-term outcomes for individuals and families. HB1246 reflects these proven best practices by prioritizing direct connections to services rather than passive information sharing. This is especially critical at a time when Medicaid work requirements could place an estimated 9.9 million to 14.9 million people nationwide at risk of losing coverage by 2034. A centralized, regularly updated database, paired with enrollment assistance, will make employment and training opportunities more visible and navigable for Marylanders, helping them secure work, build skills, and maintain access to vital health and nutrition benefits.

For these reasons, Catholic Charities of Baltimore urges the committee to issue a favorable report for House Bill 1246.

Submitted By: Madelin Martinez, Director of Advocacy on behalf of Meti Negassa, Advocacy Fellow and Erin Finnegan Smith
Director of Workforce Development