



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 24th 2026

SB686

**PFAS Chemicals – Product Phase Outs and Registration Requirements
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **Senate Bill 686**. The Maryland Catholic Conference 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 686 proposes phasing out the sale, distribution, or manufacture of products containing intentionally added PFAS chemical substances well-known for their persistence in the environment and harmful impacts on human health. The legislation establishes a clear timeline for phasing out PFAS in categories such as food packaging, textiles, cosmetics, and other consumer goods. It also requires product registration and compliance testing to ensure that manufacturers meet safety standards and that harmful chemicals are no longer introduced into Maryland's commerce or environment.

This policy protects Maryland residents from exposure to toxic chemicals linked to cancer, endocrine disruption, immune system suppression, and long-term environmental contamination. By ensuring manufacturers transition away from PFAS compounds, the bill supports a healthier marketplace and reduces the burden on taxpayers and communities who would otherwise bear the cost of cleanup, medical consequences, and ecological damage. This proactive regulatory approach protects families, protects our water, and safeguards the future health of our state's natural resources.

Catholic social teaching reminds us through *Laudato Si'* that caring for creation is a moral responsibility entrusted to all people of goodwill. The Church emphasizes that environmental harm is, at its heart, harm against human beings, especially the poor and vulnerable who often live closest to contaminated land and waterways. Phasing out PFAS chemicals is a concrete act of stewardship and respect for human dignity, ensuring that the goods we produce and consumption do not endanger the health or future of our neighbors. Supporting this legislation is a meaningful expression of our call to protect both creation and the wellbeing of every family who depends on it.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **Senate Bill 686**.