



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 24<sup>th</sup> 2026

SB596

**Large Load Customers - Electric System Interconnection and Demand Response Program  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **Senate Bill 596**. 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 596** streamlines the way high-demand facilities connect to the electric system by exempting certain customers from the lengthy certificate of public convenience and necessity process. It also directs the Public Service Commission to establish a clear, structured process to guide how these large load customers safely interconnect and contract for electric service.

**Senate Bill 596** creates a more predictable and efficient system for integrating large-scale energy users while ensuring the stability and reliability of Maryland's electric grid. By establishing consistent requirements and offering appropriate prioritization within the grid, the legislation helps prevent system overload, supports responsible grid planning, and provides greater clarity for businesses looking to invest or expand in Maryland. These improvements are beneficial for communities—ensuring their local infrastructure is not strained; for families—who rely on a dependable and affordable energy system; and for the state—by attracting economic growth, supporting clean-energy capacity, and promoting a resilient and well-managed energy network.

This legislation emphasizes the common good, responsible stewardship of resources, and a preferential option for the vulnerable. A stable and well-regulated energy system ensures that households—especially those most economically fragile—are not disproportionately burdened by grid failures, rising costs, or inadequate infrastructure. By improving reliability and sustainability, Maryland acts as a responsible steward of creation and promotes justice through equitable access to essential services.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **Senate Bill 596**.