



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

**March 12, 2026**

**House Bill 1159**

**Public Health and Health Insurance - Access to Abortion Care - Reporting  
Requirements  
House Health Committee**

**Position: Unfavorable**

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 1159** requires that the annual report on the Abortion Care Clinical Training Program include certain recommendations; and requiring the Maryland Insurance Commissioner to collect certain data on certain segregated accounts established under the federal Affordable Care Act and certain federal regulations from certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and health maintenance organizations and submit a certain report to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health Committee on or before January 1 each year.

In fiscal year 2025, the Moore-Miller Administration allocated \$5 million to increase Medicaid reimbursements for abortion care and reproductive health services. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Health granted \$10.6 million to the University of Maryland, Baltimore, to oversee the state's Abortion Care Clinical Training Program.<sup>1</sup> These expenditures highlight the substantial financial investment in reproductive healthcare, reinforcing the need for legislative oversight to ensure that funds are allocated responsibly. Maryland's estimated annual cost for Medicaid-funded medication abortions is approximately \$3.7 million, based on a national average cost of \$600 per procedure and the state's reported 11,567 Medicaid-funded abortions in 2022.<sup>2</sup> This estimate, assuming 53% of abortions are medication-based, does not include privately insured or out-of-pocket procedures.

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<https://governor.maryland.gov/news/press/pages/governor-moore-announces-156-million-investment-to-improve-abortion-care-access-statewide.aspx?utm>

<sup>2</sup> [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/fnotes/bil\\_0008/hb0958.pdf?utm](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/fnotes/bil_0008/hb0958.pdf?utm)

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Importantly, nonprofit religious healthcare institutions should not be included in any mandate or workforce calculation that assumes participation in abortion services. Many nonprofit hospitals operate under longstanding religious exemptions that recognize their constitutional and statutory rights to adhere to their moral and ethical teachings. Catholic and other faith-based hospitals do not provide abortions or employ abortion providers because doing so would violate their religious doctrine and moral commitments regarding the sanctity of life. Any policy recommendation must respect these protections and avoid compelling religious institutions acting contrary to their beliefs.

The Maryland Catholic Conference maintains that abortion does not respect the inherent dignity of human life, particularly the vulnerable life in the womb. At the same time, careful data collection can help policymakers better understand how public funds are being used. Legislative oversight should promote fiscal responsibility, transparency, and respect for both human dignity and religious liberty.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for an unfavorable report on **HB 1159**.

Thank you for your consideration.