



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 26th 2026

HB194

Incarcerated Job Training Act
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 194**. **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.

House Bill 194 requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to develop and offer apprenticeship programs in skilled trades for incarcerated individuals. The program aims to equip participants with marketable job skills and provide opportunities to earn wages that can support them and, when appropriate, their families. The bill also permits a portion of an individual's wages to be paid to dependents in financial need.

Access to vocational training is a key factor in reducing recidivism and improving economic stability after release. By offering apprenticeship opportunities, Maryland can better prepare incarcerated individuals for meaningful employment and successful reintegration into society. Allowing wages to be distributed to spouses, children, or dependents also helps families maintain stability during times of incarceration. This bill is not only practical but restorative—strengthening families, building stronger communities, and supporting long-term economic growth.

The Church teaches that every person is endowed with dignity and capable of transformation. Providing pathways to education and employment honors this dignity and reflects our belief in redemption and second chances. This legislation supports the common good by preparing individuals for productive futures, strengthening family bonds, and reducing cycles of poverty and incarceration. It aligns with the Gospel call to “visit the imprisoned” and help restore hope, opportunity, and human flourishing.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 194**.