



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 4th 2026

HB1571

Real Property - Access to Counsel in Evictions Program and Mobile Home Parks
Judiciary Committee
Position: Favorable

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 1571**. 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 1571 strengthens the Access to Counsel in Evictions Program by extending legal representation and supportive services to individuals living in mobile home parks. Mobile home residents often face unique vulnerabilities, including complex tenancy laws and power imbalances between residents and park owners. By authorizing prospective residents to take legal action when essential documents or disclosures are withheld, the bill ensures transparency, fairness in housing agreements, and accountability for park owners. Its purpose is to prevent exploitation and ensure residents understand their rights before entering long-term commitments.

Expanding access to legal counsel helps stabilize households, prevent unjust evictions, and reduce the long-term social and economic costs associated with housing insecurity. Families who receive legal support are more likely to remain housed, avoid homelessness, and protect their financial well-being. When communities experience fewer evictions, neighborhoods remain stable, local schools and businesses benefit, and social safety nets experience less strain. These protections are especially critical in mobile home communities, where residents often own their homes but rent the land—creating unique risks when legal protections are weak or unclear.

By defending the dignity of the human person and promoting the common good through stable housing we prioritize the most vulnerable populations. Ensuring that families have fair access to legal support is an expression of solidarity, especially toward those who face structural disadvantages in the housing market. Housing is more than a commodity—it is a basic human need essential to safety, stability, and family life. By expanding legal protections and preventing unjust displacement, this bill honors the Gospel call to protect the vulnerable and uphold justice in social structures. Supporting this bill is a moral commitment to fairness, compassion, and the well-being of Maryland families.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 1571**.