



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

February 12<sup>th</sup> 2026

HB542

**Earned Income Tax Credit - Individuals Without Qualifying Children – Eligibility  
Ways and Means Committee  
Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 542**. **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 542** expands access to the Maryland EITC by adjusting income thresholds and broadening eligibility for workers without qualifying children. Beginning after the 2025 tax year, the bill also ensures that income limits and phase-out amounts are annually adjusted for inflation. This legislation aims to make the EITC more inclusive, responsive, and reflective of economic realities for low-income workers across Maryland.

This policy ensures that hardworking individuals—many of whom are single adults, young workers, or individuals struggling to make ends meet—receive meaningful financial support. By expanding EITC eligibility, Maryland strengthens an effective anti-poverty tool that boosts household income, stimulates local economies, and improves financial stability for thousands of residents. This legislation recognizes the rising cost of living and proactively works to reduce economic hardship for Marylanders who are often overlooked in tax relief programs.

Society must support economic structures that allow every person to live with dignity. Expanding the EITC reflects the principles of the common good, solidarity, and the preferential option for the poor. By supporting low-wage workers and enabling them to meet basic needs, this bill upholds the belief that all people deserve fair opportunities, just compensation, and pathways to stability. Financial relief for vulnerable workers is a moral imperative rooted in promoting human dignity and strengthening family and community life.

Expanding the EITC for individuals without qualifying children is a compassionate, practical, and economically sound policy that uplifts workers who contribute daily to the well-being of our communities. This legislation helps ensure that Maryland remains a place where all residents—regardless of family status—can strive toward economic security with dignity and hope.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 542**.