



LARRY HOGAN  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

May 26, 2016

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller  
President of the Senate  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Michael E. Busch  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Mr. President and Speaker:

In accordance with Article II Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, Senate Bill 488 and House Bill 1317 – Prince George’s County – Alcoholic Beverages Regulation Reform Act of 2017 will become law without my signature.

Our administration has been outspoken on our efforts to reform Maryland’s ethics laws and to stop government corruption. I submitted a package of bills to the General Assembly, which included the Public Integrity Act, Legislative Transparency Act, and Liquor Board Reform Act, to strengthen ethics laws and prevent corruption, increase transparency, and reform the liquor board appointment process. With your assistance and leadership, we were successful in passing the majority of these initiatives and this bill includes many of the provisions which we proposed in our reform package.

While I actively support many of the reforms contained in this legislation, one section gives me great pause. This bill gives the authority to appoint liquor board members to the Prince George’s County Executive, removing the authority of the governor.

As indicated by the media coverage and court filings regarding the current indictments dealing with the Prince George’s County Board of License Commissioners, the current state of corruption was very much a local government problem.

Removing the oversight of the governor and empowering the very government that allowed this situation to fester is not the recipe for true reform. In fact, it could allow political patronage, “pay-to-play” culture and outright corruption to compromise the other positive developments in this bill.

The indictments of members of the legislature and local government are extremely disconcerting, and while I am generally very supportive of giving local government more control, I cannot in

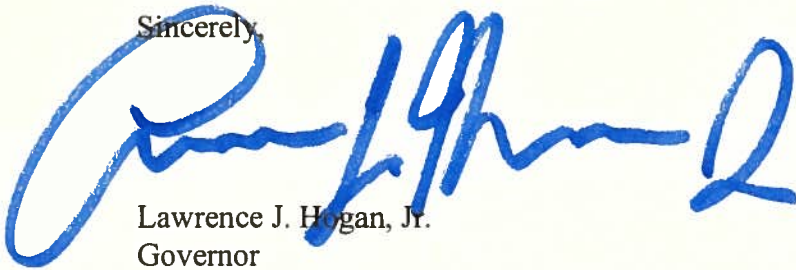
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good conscience support this provision under these circumstances.

In light of recent events, there should be more state oversight of this Board, not less. I cannot support simply handing more authority to the very local officials who were supposed to be providing oversight to the Board while this unethical behavior was taking place.

However, because of the other positive reforms found in this bill, I will allow this legislation to become law without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Governor