

six of the City senators, including the sponsor of the bill, to veto the legislation for several reasons. The amendment at issue was added to Senate Bill 524 in the final moments of the Legislative Session. It was not the subject of any public hearing and was not reviewed by either the Baltimore City Delegation or the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee.

While the intent of the amendment, as explained on the Senate floor, was to prohibit what are referred to as "mega bars," any establishment with a capacity of 150 or more that serves alcoholic beverages would be prohibited unless it could satisfy the average daily receipts requirement. It has been brought to my attention that many restaurants with a capacity of over 150 persons would not be able to meet that requirement. The 1987 Census of Retail Trade indicates that a national average of 20.7 percent of total sales in restaurants is from alcoholic drinks (79.3 percent in food). While on its face, the 80 percent daily food receipts requirement of the bill may seem reasonable, even the average restaurant (79.3 percent) technically would not meet the requirement, and would be prohibited. Furthermore, by virtue of that figure being an average, many establishments would fall above the 20 percent figure, and also be prohibited. Whether the General Assembly intended such a broad prohibition is unknown because this provision was not subject to any public hearings or debate.

Additionally, no provision in the bill addresses the circumstance where a restaurant fails to meet the 80 percent food requirement in a given year. The restaurant potentially could lose its liquor license, an event that could severely impact the viability of the restaurant.

Like those who requested a veto, I appreciate the intent behind the amendment. However, a bill could be more narrowly crafted to address the problem. The sponsor of the original bill has pledged to work with the amendment's sponsor to fashion a bill that more narrowly and appropriately addresses the problem. I support that endeavor.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill 524.

Sincerely,  
Parris N. Glendening  
Governor

**Senate Bill No. 524**

AN ACT concerning

**Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages – Board of License Commissioners**

FOR the purpose of prohibiting the transfer of an alcoholic beverages license into or within certain areas of Baltimore City; establishing certain exceptions; including certain areas of Baltimore City within a certain exception to certain restrictions on the issuance and transfer of certain alcoholic beverages licenses; expanding the standards for removing an employee of the Board of License Commissioners for Baltimore City; prohibiting a commissioner or employee of the Board of License Commissioners for Baltimore City from soliciting or receiving, directly or on behalf of another person, a political contribution from certain persons; prohibiting a licensee or a person who is engaged in the manufacture or sale of alcoholic beverages from making a political