

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2004.

May 25, 2004

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

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, today I have vetoed House Bill 951 – *Access to Public Records – Study*.

House Bill 951 creates a 15-member study commission to examine Title 10, Subtitle 6 of the State Government Article relating to public access to public records. The appointment of members includes one member of each chamber appointed by the presiding officers and the Attorney General or his designee. The Governor is empowered to appoint the remaining 12 members from the organizations or categories specified in the bill. The commission is also directed to consult with a judiciary liaison, designated by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, with regard to the findings of a recent study conducted by the Judiciary about public access to court records. Finally, the commission is to make recommendations and propose legislation to “effectuate its findings”. The commission’s report is due by December 1, 2004, and the commission terminates as of December 31, 2004.

I am troubled by the number of task forces and study commissions that are being created annually by the General Assembly. These statutory commissions require a substantial expenditure of time and resources to identify and appoint their members. Once appointed, these task forces and study groups require significant staff support and other resources to achieve results of dubious importance. In the case of House Bill 951, one of its primary designated tasks is to study a previous study – a task that opens the door to endless possibilities for future studies.

For the above stated reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 951.

Very truly yours,  
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.  
Governor

**House Bill No. 951**

AN ACT concerning

~~Study Commission to Study the Public’s Access to Public Records~~  
**Access to Public Records – Study**

FOR the purpose of creating a Study Commission to Study the Public’s Access to Public Records; providing for the membership of the Study Commission; requiring the Study Commission to elect its chairman; requiring the