

Our referendum procedures, requiring only 10,000 signatures on a petition to place a State-wide question on the ballot, are obsolete and open to abuse. We must not, of course, disturb the time-tested, well-established right of the people to pass judgment upon laws enacted by their legislative representatives. But I submit that we would more nearly fulfill the intent of the framers of this constitutional provision if the number of signatures required bore a more reasonable relationship to population. I, therefore, hope you will see fit to approve such constitutional amendment at this session.

I have been pleased by the excellent progress that has been made in the voluntary desegregation of hotel and restaurant facilities in Maryland. I think that within a few years this issue could be settled on a purely voluntary basis. But events of recent months have convinced me that some legislation is needed in this area, and I hope you will pass a public accommodations bill at this session.

Maryland's laws to protect the public against unscrupulous selling and investment schemes contain certain gaps and inadequacies which should be remedied. Complaints of consumers who have been created and defrauded have multiplied in recent years. A bill to erase this evil will be placed before you for your consideration at this session. I request that you give it your support. Likewise, a tightening of our "Blue Sky" laws is urgently needed to protect the public from fraud in the investment field.

Before you at this session will be a bill, drafted by a commission appointed by me, to correct this condition. I request that you pass this measure.

My recital of these particular matters should not be construed to mean that this is the extent of the legislative program my administration will support at this session. Other matters will be brought to your attention from time to time during the session.

Now we come to the most important task at hand—the development of a fiscal program to finance the agencies, institutions and services the people require of their State Government. As is customary, documents containing the details of my program are being placed in your hands today. These include the budget book, with personnel supplement, and my complete printed message to you. Some departmental allocations were given to you earlier in this message. For those not mentioned, I refer you to the printed documents. I shall offer you here no more than a summation of the budget I am proposing.

The budget which I offer you for fiscal 1963 calls for a total fund