

This bill was introduced by Senators Lapidés and James and passed the General Assembly with a minimum of debate. Many knowledgeable persons consider it a "national model" for other states to follow. It clearly sets forth our determination to keep the air clean and to protect our health, general welfare and property. The State Health Department is fully responsible and it must establish rules and regulations by June 1, 1968. Regional differences are recognized and local services must be utilized to the full possible extent, thus laying the groundwork for a truly local—State—Federal program. In the event of emergency, the Governor is authorized to act swiftly. Finally there is no provision for variance or exception to the rules and regulations. Polluting the air or failure to take corrective measures according to the plan can result in a stiff fine of up to \$1000 per day.

This new law is but the beginning. It will take time, money and the effort of well-trained and dedicated people to do this job. The Health Department is searching the State and the country to find the best qualified and available people.

I have included in my supplemental budget an additional \$31,657 for air pollution control, bringing the total to \$176,031, for the coming year. In keeping with a promise I made during the campaign for Governor, this administration will wage a vigorous attack against air pollution.

I hereby call on industry, the various State and Federal agencies, and all private organizations and citizens to pledge their cooperation so that we can restore the air we breathe to a healthy and comfortable level and to prevent further pollution of the thin layer of atmosphere above this earth.

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STATEMENT ON SIGNING HOUSE BILL 51  
(PROVIDING STRICTER CONTROLS OVER STRIP  
MINING)

April 14, 1967

This legislation, House Bill 51, marks a significant step forward in Maryland in the control and regulation of strip mining.

It will effectively require for the first time the backfilling and reforestation of land that has been mined, and thus will contribute to the beauty of the countryside as well as the clearness of our streams.