

ington Regional District under the jurisdiction of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. This is the portion of Montgomery County generally referred to as "the upper County". Many residents of this area have expressed objection to their inclusion in the district. From the best available information, it would seem that the extension of the Commission's jurisdiction to this predominately rural area is premature and unnecessary. Insofar as planning controls may be desirable in this area immediately and in the future, I have already signed House Bill 526, now Chapter 668 of the Acts of 1955, which authorizes a county planning board at the election of the County Council. The board would consist of the Montgomery County members of the Commission, plus additional members that the County Council may choose to add. This seems to meet the present needs of the area and to be most in accord with the general wishes of the citizens involved, and I have therefore vetoed House Bill 552.

Respectfully,

(s) THEODORE R. MCKELDIN,

Governor

TRMcK/A

#### House Bill No. 559—Montgomery County Tobacco Tax

AN ACT to add a new section to the Montgomery County Code (1950 Edition), being Article 16 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Maryland, title "Montgomery County", sub-title "Title 10. Powers of County Council", sub-heading "Chapter 57. General Powers", said new section to be known as Section 57-8 and to follow immediately after Section 57-7, relating to a tobacco tax in Montgomery County.

May 9, 1955

Honorable John C. Luber  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Mr. Speaker:

House Bill 559 authorizes the imposition of a tobacco tax in Montgomery County, without limitation on the rate of tax, and is similar to House Bill 607 dealing with Harford County. Every previous legislative authorization of a county tobacco tax has contained specified limitations on the rate. While it might be felt that competitive disadvantages with adjacent areas would serve as a natural economic limitation factor on the rate of tax, or even its imposition, experience has shown that such is not the case. I have publicly expressed my opposition to a State tobacco tax in the interest of Southern Maryland agriculture, of which tobacco crops are an important part. However, I feel that the State should not wholly abdicate, as a practical matter, its taxing powers in this area by any local grant of unlimited taxing power. In addition, short of non-taxation, the limitation of rate is more consistent with a policy of fostering the Maryland tobacco industry insofar as possible.