

MARYLAND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Baltimore, Md., April 8, 1969.

Hon. Marvin Mandel
Governor of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Mandel:

I understand that House Bill 908 which imposes a severance tax on "sand, gravel or stone" excavated or quarried in Cecil County was passed by the General Assembly on the last day of the 1969 Session. Although this was introduced as a local bill, I feel that it has far reaching implications for the State as a whole.

I testified against this Bill before the Senate Finance Committee on March 21. My reasons for opposition were as follows:

A severance tax imposed by a local jurisdiction is unfair to the local mineral producer in that it puts him at a competitive disadvantage with respect to other mineral producers in adjacent jurisdictions. Such a tax in one county may lead to the imposition of a similar tax in other counties. If this practice would become widespread in Maryland it would put the Maryland mineral producers at a disadvantage with respect to adjacent states. The tax would eventually be passed on to the consumer, thus leading to higher building costs and contributing to the inflationary spiral.

I should also point out that this bill apparently does nothing toward reclamation of mined lands. A Governor's Commission to study the supply and availability of mineral resources of Maryland has drafted a bill (not introduced in this Session) which would provide for regulation of the mineral industries and also provide for the reclamation of mined lands. It would seem to me that such a proposal is a much more intelligent and positive approach toward mining and quarrying than the imposition of a local "nuisance" tax.

Substantially the same bill as HB 908 has been introduced at least three times in the General Assembly. It was passed in 1961 but was vetoed by Governor Tawes. Dr. Joseph Singewald, my predecessor as State Geologist, recommended a veto at that time for substantially the same reasons as I have enumerated above.

Because I feel very strongly that the passage of this Bill into law would lead to a chaotic series of local bills detrimental to the best interests of the State, I respectfully recommend your veto of House Bill 908.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ Kenneth N. Weaver,

Director.

Vetoed by the Governor—May 28, 1969

House Bill No. 908—By Delegates Mackie and Burkheimer:

An Act to add new Section 119A to the Code of Public Local Laws of Cecil County (1961 Edition, being Article 8 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Maryland), title "Cecil County," subtitle "County Commissioners," to follow immediately after Section 119 thereof, to provide for the