

This bill, in the judgment of the Attorney General and other competent legal authorities, is laced with most serious ambiguities and uncertainties, most, if not all of which had been addressed and resolved in the Administration bill. The effect of this would be to produce endless litigation, innumerable direct and collateral attacks on the bill, the end result of which would be uncertainty in the law and inevitable delays in its actual implementation. In the bill itself is an arsenal of weapons for those determined to see that it is never enforced.

A copy of the Attorney General's Opinion is attached to this veto message, and should be considered a part of it.

One of the principal reasons that the criminal justice system in general, and the judicial component of that system in particular, is under such heavy attack from the public is its allowance of seemingly endless court proceedings, much of which arises from imperfectly drafted criminal statutes. In the judgment of the Attorney General, Senate Bill 106 would exacerbate, rather than alleviate, this problem. In light of all of the problems pointed out by the Attorney General, I suspect that it would be years before anyone would know whether, and to what extent, this bill could actually be implemented.

I veto this bill reluctantly because of my strong belief in its objectives. However, I cannot assume the responsibility for creating such uncertainty in the law and the delays and confusion that would arise from it. History has taught us so well how clear and precise a bill of this type must be. I regret that the lesson has not yet been learned.

Sincerely,
Marvin Mandel
Governor

Letter from State Law Department on Senate Bill No. 106

May 23, 1977

The Honorable Marvin Mandel
Governor of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland