

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed Senate Bill 567.

Senate Bill 567 would alter the formula for determining the supplemental grant for State Aid for Police Protection from \$2 to \$3 per capita in each subdivision and would include Baltimore City in the Supplemental Grant Program at the rate of \$1 per capita. This bill would increase State aid to local governments by \$5 million in fiscal year 1996.

While I certainly cannot argue with the benefits of expanded police services, the proliferation of statutory mandates on State spending erodes the ability of the Executive to establish spending priorities and develop a budget that reflects those priorities. Such mandates also limit the ability of the Governor to respond to fiscal crises in times of economic distress. This is especially true for mandated funding of the magnitude proposed in Senate Bill 567, which is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in revenues.

During my tenure as Governor, I have always been supportive of public safety programs at the local level. The fiscal year 1995 budget included \$52.5 million in aid for police protection, an increase of \$8.8 million or 20% over the previous year. I provided an additional \$3.2 million for special drug enforcement and violent crime grant programs in Prince George's County and \$4.3 million for Baltimore City foot patrol and violent crime grants. In 1991, my Administration introduced legislation that authorized the State to take over the Baltimore City Jail so the City could devote future resources to law enforcement needs. Therefore, in vetoing Senate Bill 567, it is not my intent to impair funding for local police protection.

The Department of Budget and Fiscal Planning has predicted that in the near future, the growth in spending as a result of existing statutory requirements will far outweigh projected revenue growth. I therefore think it is unwise to tie the hands of the future Executive with additional spending mandates. However, the next Governor can continue to enhance local police protection by providing additional funds through the budget, as I have chosen to do.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill 567.

Sincerely,
William Donald Schaefer
Governor

Senate Bill No. 567

AN ACT concerning

State Aid for Police Protection – Supplemental Grant

FOR the purpose of altering the per capita amount of a certain supplemental grant by the State to certain subdivisions for police protection; providing for a supplemental grant by the State to Baltimore City of a certain per capita amount; requiring the State to allocate and distribute the grant among the subdivisions and certain