

Education in office on the effective date of this Act, but the provisions of this Act concerning the salary or compensation of the President and members of the Calvert County Board of Education shall take effect at the beginning of the next following term of office.

SECTION 3, 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to the provisions of Section 2 3 of this Act and for the sole purpose of providing for the referendum required by Section 2 3, this Act shall take effect July 1, 1995.

May 24, 1995

The Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr.  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 215.

House Bill 215 would require State agencies that use forms that require identification of an individual by race to include the term "multiracial" as an option of race.

The legislative history of House Bill 215 indicates that the intent of the measure was to provide an option for racial self-identification for children whose parents are socially recognized as belonging to different races. Such an option would prevent those children from being forced to select the race of one parent over the other.

Although the intent of the bill is to address a growing social issue, the effect of the measure goes far beyond providing a self-identification alternative. The statistical data State agencies gather concerning the racial demographics of the State is reported to numerous federal agencies. Pursuant to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, "Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal and Administrative Reporting," the federal government recognizes only five racial identification categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, black, white, and Hispanic. Currently, the Office of Management and Budget and the United States Census Bureau are researching possible changes in racial identification categories at the federal level. For Maryland to add a "multiracial" category at this time would prevent the federal government from accounting for those individuals who choose to identify themselves as multiracial.

Until the federal government has adjusted its racial identification categories in a manner that is capable of accounting for all of Maryland's citizens, it would be inadvisable to make a unilateral change in those categories. Such a change could have negative consequences with regard to federally-funded programs that are partially based on numbers of individuals who fall within classifications considered to be historically disadvantaged.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 215.