

CRESAP management reform recommendations. The General Assembly introduced and passed House Bill 608 in response to concerns over the failure of BCPS to fully implement a majority of CRESAP management reform recommendations. The objective of the recommendations was to implement structural management changes that would improve BCPS student performance and increase public confidence in the education of those students. The bill's sponsors and supporters are to be commended for their commitment to improving the education of the City's children.

The General Assembly, Mayor Schmoke, and I share a common goal of implementing a City-State agreement that will increase student achievement and correct management deficiencies in the Baltimore City Public Schools. Fundamental and systematic reform is needed to ensure that City children will be able to compete against the smartest, best-educated students in the world. Withholding almost \$5.9 million of State funds, however, with less than six weeks left in Fiscal Year 1996 will cause a significant financial crisis for Baltimore City. While I clearly support the intentions of House Bill 608, the immediacy of its impact makes this legislation unacceptable.

Mayor Schmoke has committed to entering into an agreement within sixty days that will be incorporated into consent decrees with the Baltimore City Circuit Court and the U.S. District Court. I envision that this City-State agreement will include full oversight of all functions relating to the Baltimore City Public Schools. Consistent with legislative intent, I have instructed the Secretary of Budget and Fiscal Planning to withhold \$5.9 million of State funds from Baltimore City in Fiscal Year 1997 until the agreement is created. This is in addition to the \$24 million of State funds being withheld in Fiscal Year 1997 by the General Assembly contingent upon the creation and progress in implementing the City-State agreement.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 608.

Sincerely,
Parris N. Glendening
Governor

House Bill No. 608

AN ACT concerning

Baltimore City Schools – Funding

FOR the purpose of ~~authorizing, ratifying, and sanctioning a reduction in~~ withholding the State share of basic current expenses for elementary and secondary education for the City of Baltimore by a certain amount for a certain fiscal year, contingent upon ~~receipt of certain information; clarifying legislative intent~~ a certain condition being met; restricting the use of certain funds; requiring the submission of certain information; requiring a certain approval; prohibiting the reversion of certain funds to the State General Fund; and providing for the effective date of this Act.