

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed Senate Bill 501 – Interim Domestic Violence Orders and Interim Peace Orders – Issuance by District Court Commissioners.

This bill implements a proposed constitutional amendment allowing District Court Commissioners to issue interim orders for protection pending hearings on domestic violence and peace order petitions. In connection with a petition for relief from domestic violence, whenever a judge finds reasonable grounds to believe that abuse of a child or abuse of a vulnerable adult has occurred, the court must forward to the local department of social services a copy of the petition and temporary protective order. The local department must investigate the alleged abuse and send to the court a copy of the report of the investigation by the date of the final protective order hearing. In addition, the bill eliminates the requirement that a hearing on a petition for a temporary protective order or a temporary peace order be ex parte.

House Bill 663, which was passed by the General Assembly and signed by me, accomplishes the same purpose. Therefore, it is not necessary for me to sign Senate Bill 501.

Sincerely,
Parris N. Glendening
Governor

Senate Bill No. 501

AN ACT concerning

Interim Domestic Violence Orders and Interim Peace Orders - Issuance by District Court Commissioners

FOR the purpose of implementing the Constitutional amendment expanding the authority of District Court commissioners to include the issuance of interim orders for protection pending hearings on domestic violence and peace order petitions; defining the scope of the authority of District Court commissioners to issue interim orders; authorizing a petitioner for a domestic violence order or peace order to file a petition with a District Court commissioner under certain circumstances; establishing that a petitioner for a domestic violence order may not be required to pay a filing fee or costs for the issuance or service of an interim order issued by a District Court commissioner; specifying the types of relief that may be granted in an interim domestic violence order or interim peace order; requiring interim orders to contain certain statements; requiring a temporary order hearing to be held within a certain time period after issuance of an interim order except under certain circumstances; providing for the service and return of service of interim orders; providing for the transfer of case files from District Court commissioners to courts; requiring a law enforcement officer to take certain actions on receipt of a petition and interim order; establishing that an interim order is effective for a certain period of time; establishing that a decision of a District Court commissioner to grant or deny interim relief is not