

May 15, 2002

The Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr.
Speaker of the House
State House
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 25 – State Comptroller’s Office – Field Enforcement Division – Law Enforcement Authority.

House Bill 25 expands the police authority of authorized employees of the Investigative Services Unit of the State Comptroller’s Office to enforce all matters within the authority and jurisdiction of the Comptroller. Under current law, the authority of the Investigative Services Unit is limited to enforcing only laws delineated in statute, such as the alcoholic beverages tax, the tobacco tax, the motor fuel tax, the motor carrier tax and motor fuel and lubricants.

House Bill 25 substantially broadens the law enforcement powers of the Comptroller’s Office. Instead of amending the current list of taxes for which the Comptroller is granted enforcement powers, the legislation repeals this list entirely and grants the employees of the Investigative Services Unit broad police powers over all matters within the “authority and jurisdiction” of the Comptroller’s Office. This expansion of police powers is overly broad and unwarranted. Citizens would rightfully have a very negative reaction if such broad powers were given to all State agencies. Under current practice, the Comptroller’s Investigative Services Unit works in conjunction with other State and local law enforcement agencies to enforce various revenue laws. This arrangement has worked well in the past. While I am not opposed to a limited extension of the Comptroller’s law enforcement authority, I cannot support the broad expansion of police powers proposed in House Bill 25.

For the above reason, I have vetoed House Bill 25.

Sincerely,
Parris N. Glendening
Governor

House Bill No. 25

AN ACT concerning

State Comptroller’s Office – Field Enforcement Division – Law Enforcement Authority

FOR the purpose of expanding the police authority of certain authorized employees of the Field Enforcement Division of the State Comptroller’s Office; and generally relating to the law enforcement powers of the State Comptroller’s Office.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Tax – General