

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2002.

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 169 – Political Posters – Worcester County.

House Bill 169 removes Worcester County from the list of counties in which persons are banned from placing posters or advertisements on public property. In other words, if House Bill 169 were signed into law, it would be legal to place political signs or advertisements on public property in Worcester County. However, earlier this month, I signed Senate Bill 1, now Chapter 291 of the Acts of 2002, which repeals the section of law that House Bill 169 amends.

My decision to veto House Bill 169 is not based on any support for the proliferation of political signs or any type of signs on public property. To the contrary, I believe there should be additional restrictions, and more strict enforcement, regarding the placement of all signs. Many Marylanders share my distaste for the proliferation of signs that clutter our public spaces. In some instances, signs can serve as distractions or block the view of a motorist or pedestrian, posing a safety hazard. Frequently, articles in the press detail efforts of Maryland citizens who take it upon themselves to help remove these illegal or unwanted signs from beside our roadways. These efforts are indicative of the increased frustration many people feel towards these eyesores.

The provisions of Senate Bill 1 that repeal this section of law were inserted based on advice of the Attorney General's Office that the current law would likely be found unconstitutional if challenged in court, based on the statute's specific targeting of political signs. I would encourage the General Assembly and the next Governor to evaluate ways to legally restrict the placement of signs of any type on public property and develop improved methods of enforcing these laws.

For the above reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 169.

Sincerely,
Parris N. Glendening
Governor

House Bill No. 169

AN ACT concerning

Political Posters – Worcester County

FOR the purpose of eliminating the application of a certain provision regulating the