

May 24, 1991

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of the Senate
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed Senate Bill 597.

This bill modifies the mission of the Lida Lee Tall Learning Resources Center and expands the membership of the Board of Trustees. In addition, it provides for the creation of two task forces, both staffed by the Maryland State Department of Education. One task force is to recommend a permanent system of financial support for the Center. The other task force is to develop a plan for the dissemination of information, curricula, and other programs.

The statutory purpose of the Lida Lee Tall Learning Resources Center is set forth in Section 24-106 of the Education Article. It states that the purpose of the Center is to provide "an accessible laboratory environment for:

- (1) Training students from public institutions of higher education to be teachers in elementary schools by providing students the opportunity for early field experience;
- (2) Identifying and addressing appropriate early childhood and elementary education research needs and priorities in this State;
- (3) Providing opportunities for demonstration and observation of effective teaching practices; and
- (4) Providing in-service and staff development opportunities for faculty from teacher education programs, prospective principals, and experienced teachers in Maryland elementary schools."

Senate Bill 597 would significantly expand the statutory purpose of the Lida Lee Tall Learning Resources Center to include developing and implementing a center for elementary science and mathematics education, expanding the curriculum to include entrepreneurial skills, foreign languages, and world culture, and instituting model programs for parents to aid students with homework.

That proposed expanded mission includes some very laudable goals, but it is my understanding that the Center is not meeting its existing mission as a laboratory for elementary education methods. Except for holding an annual research conference, distributing the proceedings of those conferences, and issuing an occasional research monograph, the Lida Lee Tall Learning Resources Center helps a very limited population and its services do not have statewide implications. During more prosperous times, the continuation of funding for the Lida Lee Tall Learning Resources Center would not have