

I have sought the opinion of the State Law Department on the matter and inasmuch as a general survey of legal regulations will be made in the near future, I think it preferable to veto this measure and to have the Legislature advised at the next session fully as to the relevant information assembled as a result of the survey.

Under the circumstances. I will veto the bill.

Chapter 839 (House Bill 205) and Chapter 705 (House Bill 350). These two enactments of the recent General Assembly relate to the sale of intoxicating liquors to minors, and therefore are of the greatest public interest. For that reason I have devoted careful study to the provisions of these Bills and feel impelled to state fully my reasons for their disapproval.

The Board of Liquor License Commissioners of Baltimore City in a sincere attempt to effect a solution in this difficult problem, sponsored these Bills. I recognize the fact that the Baltimore Board has made a careful study of the situation affecting minors, and is recommending only what it deems to be for the best interests of the general public as well as what may be a more workable arrangement.

One of the Bills makes it possible for a tavern proprietor to excuse himself for supplying liquor to minors by proving that he relied upon certain supposed facts, such as a written certificate that the customer was of legal age, and that the appearance of the minor indicated that he was twenty-one years or over. The written statement of the minor would be made on a form supplied by the Liquor License Commissioners.

The second Bill makes the minor guilty of a misdemeanor for making the purchase of the liquor and provides that the case may be tried before a Magistrate. In other respects, the Bill is synchronized with the first measure and, admittedly, both must stand or fall together. Against the contention of the Baltimore Board, that these measures would make for better law enforcement, I have the formal recommendations of the State's Attorney of Baltimore City and of the Police Commissioner that this legislation is ill-advised and would weaken the enforcement of liquor legislation.

The State's Attorney argues that the Bills are designed to shift the responsibility from the tavern proprietor. Further, he asserts, is the fact that the minors' cases would be tried first before the Magistrate which would not make for good procedure, and that in general, the arrangement would incite general fraud and would ultimately work to the detriment of proper liquor regulation.

The Police Commissioner of Baltimore City emphasizes the fact that the doors would be open to the temptation of trading with a minor in order to have the minor submit to a lighter punishment, and that this would operate to exculpate the