

House Bill No. 462 - Public Information - Act Amended

AN ACT concerning

Public Information Act

FOR the purpose of eliminating unnecessary definitions; adding and revising definitions; providing a policy statement; requiring State and local governments to maintain only necessary and relevant information about persons; providing greater access in certain circumstances to investigative, intelligence, and security records; generally revising the provisions relating to the right to inspect public records; making changes in the provisions permitting denial of public records or any portion thereof; providing an administrative review; providing for judicial enforcement; creating civil liability for violations; providing for appropriate personnel disciplinary action; providing for the removal of the subsections allowing special treatment of public records in Harford and ~~Charles~~ County; providing for statutory limitation on the right to bring an action; and clarifying language.

May 26, 1977

Honorable John Hanson Briscoe
Speaker of the House of Delegates
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21404

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetted House Bill 462.

This bill generally revises the Public Information Act in an effort to make State documents and records more accessible to the public; and I have no substantial objection to most of its provisions.

I am particularly concerned, however, about the effect, which was probably unintended, of an amendment appearing on page 12 of the bill. This amendment added a new section 1A to Article 76A, and reads, in relevant part:

"The State, counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions, or any agencies thereof, shall maintain only such information about a person as is relevant and necessary to accomplish a purpose of the governmental entity or agency which is required to be accomplished by statute or executive order of