attempt to vote to the same criminal penalties contained in House Bill 539, Section 16–201 fails to provide an additional civil penalty. Clearly, enacting a law that contains both criminal and civil penalties for the type of behavior exemplified in House Bill 539 is disproportionally high in comparison to other penalties contained in Maryland's Election Code for offenses relating to impersonation and voter fraud.

To this end, I will instruct the State Board of Elections to conduct a comprehensive review of all penalties contained in the Election Code. The State Board of Elections will report back to me prior to the next General Assembly session with recommendations for making all penalties fair, appropriate, and consistent throughout the Election Code.

For the above stated reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 539.

Very truly yours,
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

House Bill No. 539

AN ACT concerning

Voters' Rights Protection Act – Clarification

FOR the purpose of clarifying the circumstances under which and locations in which a person is prohibited from attiring or equipping an individual, or permitting an individual to be attired or equipped, in a certain manner in connection with an election; providing for a certain penalty; and generally relating to clarifying a certain provision of the Voters' Rights Protection Act.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Election Law
Section 16–903
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2003 Volume and 2005 Supplement)
(As enacted by Chapter 4 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2006)

BY adding to
Article – Election Law
Section 16–1003
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2003 Volume and 2005 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Election Law