

The Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr.  
Speaker of the House  
State House  
Annapolis MD 21401-1991

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I today vetoed House Bill 787 - Maryland Crime Laboratory Council.

House Bill 787, as originally introduced, created a 14 member Maryland Crime Laboratory Council within the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention (OCCP). The bill also created a Crime Laboratory User Fee Fund. In the original bill, the OCCP had the responsibility of administering the User Fee Fund grants to crime laboratories and advising the Council of those grants. The General Assembly heavily amended the legislation from its original version. As amended, House Bill 787 eliminated the User Fee Fund and simply created a Maryland Crime Laboratory Council to monitor crime laboratory services, technology, equipment and training.

Although the grant provisions were removed from the bill, the bill creates the Council in OCCP and inadvertently includes an OCCP representative on the Council. The OCCP's involvement and its advisory role for the distribution of grant funds is no longer required in the amended bill, and the OCCP does not currently have jurisdiction over the State's crime laboratories. The Department of Maryland State Police is the executive branch agency that maintains the State's crime laboratory and represents the State's interest in this area; the OCCP is the State office that administers State grant programs and oversees federal grant programs in the area of public safety and the prevention of crime and drug abuse.

For the above reasons, I have vetoed HB 787. However, notwithstanding the flaw in the legislation, I believe that the issue of examining the quality and services of the State's crime laboratories is meritorious and worthy of consideration by the appropriate State agency. I will direct the Maryland State Police to lead a statewide review of Maryland's crime laboratories giving full consideration to the issues impacting their efficient and effective operation. The State Police will issue a report on its findings to me and the General Assembly in a timely manner.

Sincerely,  
Parris N. Glendening  
Governor

### House Bill 787

AN ACT concerning

#### **Crime Laboratories Maryland Crime Laboratory Council**

FOR the purpose of establishing a Maryland Crime Laboratory Council; establishing the membership ~~and duties~~, duties, certain meeting requirements, and certain procedures of the Council; ~~establishing a Crime Laboratory User Fee Fund; requiring the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention to administer~~