

vetoed House Bill 98 – State Designations – Walking as the State Exercise.

House Bill 98 designates walking as the State exercise. The statute to be codified consists of five words preceded by a page and one half of uncodified preamble which includes the assertion that... “walking is as close to a universal physical activity as there is...” I concur with that assertion which leads to a reason for my decision to veto this legislation.

The healthful and social benefits of walking are so widely and undisputedly acknowledged that it serves no public purpose to insert the five words of House Bill 98 in the Annotated Code of Maryland. One would expect that in designating some object or activity as the “official” State object or activity that whatever it is that is thereby being so recognized has some unique connection to or special significance in the State of Maryland. With all due respect, walking does not fulfill that expectation.

I also note that each piece of legislation introduced in the General Assembly represents a significant expenditure of dollars: The only limitations imposed upon members of the legislature with respect to the introduction of bills are ones of the calendar and their own good judgment.

For the above reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 98.

Sincerely,
Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor

House Bill No. 98

AN ACT concerning

State Designations – Walking as the State Exercise

FOR the purpose of designating walking as the State exercise.

BY adding to

Article – State Government

Section 13–318

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2002 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Heart disease is the number one cause of death each year in Maryland, and thousands of Maryland citizens suffer from disease and other health problems as a result of a lack of physical activity; and

WHEREAS, Mortality rates from coronary artery disease in Maryland rank in the top one-third in the nation with more than 14,000 people dying annually, including one-third before the age of 65; and

WHEREAS, Physical inactivity and unhealthy eating are leading risk factors that contribute to at least 300,000 preventable deaths each year in the U.S.; and