

May 16, 2025

The Honorable Bill Ferguson  
President of the Senate of Maryland  
H-107 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear President Ferguson,

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I hereby veto Senate Bill 655 – *Courts – Artificial Intelligence Evidence Clinic Pilot Program*.

Senate Bill 655 establishes an Artificial Intelligence Evidence Clinic Pilot Program in the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to provide expertise on the authenticity of electronic evidence that may have been altered by artificial intelligence (AI) and admitted in court. The AOC is required to engage with college and university students and professionals who study AI and prioritize civil cases with one or more parties without legal representation or has reasonable access to expert testimony. Senate Bill 655 also authorizes the Governor to include an annual appropriation of \$250,000 for fiscal years 2027 and 2028.

While detection of AI alteration in expert evidence in judicial proceedings is and will be a legitimate and growing challenge for courts across the nation, as a separate branch of government, the Judiciary has the inherent ability to develop such programs on its own, and the authority to propose establishment of a budget for them. Therefore, the bill is unnecessary for the Judiciary to establish the Pilot Program, and legislation such as this placing detailed requirements on the Judiciary may be interpreted as an overreach into the independence of the judicial branch of government.

The Attorney General review letter for this legislation, dated April 29, 2025, advises that the provision authorizing the Governor to fund the Pilot Program has no legal effect. The letter is attached for your review, please see footnote four on page four. The State Constitution vests the Chief Justice with the authority to determine the budget and level of funding for programs in the Judicial Branch. The letter cites Article III, § 52 of the State Constitution that conveys the Governor does not have authority to amend, add, or to subtract from the Judiciary's budget. Thus, the bill's provisions granting the Governor authority to fund the Pilot Program conflict with the State Constitution.

In sum, while the bill is well-intended, its purpose can be accomplished without legislation and the bill as passed raises constitutional concerns. For these reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill 655.

Sincerely,

Wes Moore  
Governor

Attachment: April 29, 2025 Attorney General review letter for SB 655