

May 16, 2025

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

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear President Ferguson and Speaker Jones,

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I hereby veto House Bill 56 and Senate Bill 177 – *Procurement – State Department of Education – Local Food Purchasing Program*, House Bill 333 and Senate Bill 691 – *Healthcare Ecosystem Stakeholder Cybersecurity Workgroup*, and House Bill 384 and Senate Bill 157 – *Maryland Disability Service Animal Program – Established*.

As I wrote in my letter regarding HB 350 – *FY 2026 Budget*, I am proud of the work we did this session to place Maryland's state government on a stronger fiscal footing. In partnership, we turned a deficit into a surplus, and ensured that 94% of Marylanders would either receive a tax break or see no change in their income taxes. Together, we reduced spending by over \$2 billion – the single largest cut in a Maryland state budget in sixteen years.

Still, the chaos from Washington, D.C. makes every day more challenging than the last. We face a real and present danger from a White House that continues to attack our economy with reckless abandon. In a time of profound uncertainty, we must use our limited funds to prioritize policies that protect our people from the ravages of Washington; anything that fails to meet that high bar must wait for another time.

Our budget challenges also highlight the need for the State and its agencies to focus on their core missions. The state's fiscal outlook has not improved since these bills were passed. At a time where we have jointly made difficult decisions about cuts to vital services, any additional spending which is tangential to those core missions should receive close scrutiny. Collectively, these three bills would have required three agencies to work together to establish a new statewide food procurement system at the same time the federal government is pulling back on food purchasing assistance for local school systems, established a large workgroup on cybersecurity threats that is outside the expertise of the workgroup members and responsible agency, and created an underfunded program that would only be able to serve a small subgroup of agency target populations.

I recognize these bills all have positive intentions. But while there are positive aspects of the legislation, each bill directs state agencies to expand the scope of their missions to establish new programs and workgroups that they have not previously administered. Each bill requires subject matter expertise not currently on staff and I have real concerns that adequate funding will not be available to effectively establish and implement each of these new programs.

One of the first objectives I outlined for my administration was to focus on rebuilding state government and increasing state agency capacity to drive efficient, transformative results for Marylanders. I thank you and the General Assembly for partnership in this work. As we operate under this current fiscal climate, we must carefully prioritize our limited funds. In this environment, adding new responsibilities for state agencies that are tangential to their core missions makes little sense.

While I look forward to collaborating with the General Assembly to continue to make progress on these important issues, for the reasons provided in this letter, I have vetoed House Bill 56, Senate Bill 177, House Bill 333, Senate Bill 691, House Bill 384 and Senate Bill 157.

Sincerely,

Wes Moore
Governor