

May 26, 2006

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
Senate President
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. President:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, today I have vetoed Senate Bill 52 – *Maryland Transportation Authority – Membership*

Senate Bill 52 would increase the number of appointed members of the Maryland Transportation Authority from six to eight, and introduce new appointment qualifications. The bill would also alter terms, add term limitations and require that the eight members be reflective of the racial, gender, and geographic diversity of the State.

Currently, the law provides for six members of the Maryland Transportation Authority to be appointed at the discretion of the Governor with advice and consent of the Senate. No substantive basis has been provided to support a broad restructuring of the Maryland Transportation Authority as proposed by the Senate Bill 52. The layering of new, multiple appointment qualifications and requirements not only intrudes upon, but also complicates, the Executive's ability to ensure there is an optimal mix of knowledge, skills and citizen participation on the Authority.

The proposed new expertise requirements in structural engineering, transportation and land use planning raises the risk of conflict of interest among individuals in these professions and industries, and narrows the pool of qualified individuals for appointment consideration. This is further compounded by the language in the bill that, in addition to experiential requirements, mandates that an eight-person group mirror the composition of the State.

The provisions of this bill create an appointment framework that is practically impossible to satisfy.

For the above stated reasons, I have vetoed Senate Bill 52.

Very truly yours,

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor