



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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EARL RAY TOMBLIN
GOVERNOR

April 1, 2015

VIA HAND DELIVERY

The Honorable Natalie E. Tennant
Secretary of State
Building 1, Suite 157-K
State Capitol
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0770

Re: Enrolled Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 2160

Dear Secretary of State Tennant:

Pursuant to the provisions of section fourteen, article VII of the Constitution of West Virginia, I hereby disapprove the Enrolled Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 2160.

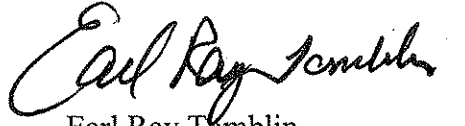
This bill would permit the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind to be eligible for all sources of funding distributed by the School Building Authority of West Virginia ("SBA"). The SBA has limited resources for funding construction and improvement projects in the public schools throughout West Virginia's fifty-five counties. I recognize the Schools for the Deaf and Blind have substantial improvement needs, and I appreciate the hard work and achievements of the Schools' teachers, aides, and students. However, this bill is problematic because it has the great potential to redirect limited resources away from the fifty-five county boards of education that apply to the SBA for funding.

This bill is also problematic because we do not yet have a firm understanding of what the Schools for the Deaf and Blind's needs are to become financially viable well into the future. Accordingly, I have asked the State Board of Education—which controls, supervises, and manages the Schools—to commission an independent, objective assessment of their needs, both facilities and curriculum-related. Outside experts should also analyze the Schools' continuing viability. Without such an assessment, there is the potential the state could spend limited resources unwisely.

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I am committed to continuing to work with the Schools and the Legislature to find an appropriate solution upon completion of the outside assessment. Because this bill is premature and not the appropriate solution, I must disapprove it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Earl Ray Tomblin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

cc: The Hon. William P. Cole III
President of the Senate

The Hon. Tim Armstead
Speaker of the House of Delegates