



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

February 11, 2016

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

The Honorable Tim Armstead  
Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates  
Room 228M, Building 1  
State Capitol Complex  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Re: Enrolled House Bill 4005

Dear Speaker Armstead:

Pursuant to the provisions of section fourteen, article VII of the Constitution of West Virginia, I hereby disapprove and return Enrolled House Bill 4005.

The Legislature of West Virginia enacted the Wages for Construction of Public Improvements Act in 1935 to ensure that laborers, workers, and mechanics receive fair wages on state public improvement contracts. Contending that the prevailing wage rates for building bridges, digging ditches, and tunneling sewers have become too generous, several legislators sought the Act's repeal during the 2015 Regular Session of the Legislature. I encouraged a less drastic course of action, and urged the Legislature to collaborate with Workforce West Virginia and our state's foremost universities to improve the Act's methodology for calculating prevailing wage rates. Working together, we achieved a reasonable compromise in 2015, modernizing the Act instead of extinguishing it.

Our compromise, it turns out, was all for naught. Enrolled House Bill 4005 repeals the Act in an about-face from our eighty-one year history of paying laborers, workers, and mechanics fairly for constructing public improvements. Because I favor compromise and fairness over extreme measures, I disapprove and return this bill.

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Sincerely,



Earl Ray Tomblin  
Governor

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

The Hon. Natalie E. Tennant  
Secretary of State