

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Charleston, WV 25305

March 24, 2010

VETO MESSAGE

The Honorable Natalie E. Tennant
Secretary of State
State Capitol
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Secretary of State Tennant:

Pursuant to the provisions of Section Fourteen, Article VII of the Constitution of West Virginia, I hereby disapprove and return Enrolled Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 4397.

The Bill requires a plan to increase the number of State Troopers in West Virginia to eight hundred by July 1, 2016. Although I firmly support enhanced public safety efforts through a plan to increase trooper strength in West Virginia, placing a specific number and time frame on that plan is something that cannot and should not be mandated by law.

Increasing trooper strength should be considered when it is feasible to effectively and efficiently do so. It must be an effort that is well planned in order to ensure that the mission of the State Police can be professionally accomplished by an elite, well-trained and well-equipped force. By mandating the State Police grow by more than one hundred twenty members in roughly five years, acceptance standards may have to be lowered to find the numbers necessary to meet the Bill's mandated trooper level of eight hundred. Lowering acceptance standards does not promote public safety and undermines the hard work of so many within the State Police who are proud to be referred to as "second to none".

For these reasons, I must veto Enrolled Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 4397.

Very truly yours,

JOE MANCHIN, III,
Governor.