STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

May 28, 2021

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

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

Dear Speaker Jones and President Ferguson:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have vetoed House Bill 1003 and Senate Bill 780 - States of Emergency - Emergency Procurement and Budget Amendments - Notice and Authorization.

As the State of Maryland's chief executive officer and commander in chief, the Governor is given broad legal authority during states of emergency for the very purpose of protecting the health, welfare, and safety of its citizens. When the first cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in Maryland more than one year ago, quick action and extraordinary measures were necessary to keep Marylanders safe from this deadly virus. My Administration has fought endlessly to save lives, as well as to help struggling Marylanders, *and we will continue to do so.* Having broad legal authority during a state of emergency empowers the Governor to lead our State most effectively during the hardest of times and allows him or her to respond effectively to the most challenging of circumstances. The very nature of an emergency commands full and focused attention, most especially when thousands of lives are at stake, and unnecessary red tape would be a direct threat to effective action at such a critical time.

The arbitrary notification and reporting requirements that this legislation requires does little for transparency yet creates administrative challenges when time is of the essence. It is unreasonable - and frankly, out of touch - for the legislature to expect the Governor or an agency head to check boxes on a form rather than focus on the emergency at hand. With robust reporting and oversight mechanisms already in place, these additional layers of bureaucracy do nothing more than create obstacles during the most urgent of times. For the General Assembly to play these types of political games during a state of emergency is simply unconscionable.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 1033 and Senate Bill 780.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor

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