

SB 612

Veto No. 17

November 26, 1975

To the Honorable, the Senate
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

I return herewith, without my approval, Senate Bill No. 612, Printer's No. 1240, entitled "An act amending the act of June 24, 1931 (P.L. 1206, No. 331), entitled 'The First Class Township Code,' further providing for provisions relating to fixing the salary, compensation and emoluments of elected officers of the township."

This bill provides for the fixing of the salary, compensation and emoluments of elected officers of first class townships. It provides that any change in salary shall become effective at the beginning of the next term of elected officers. Prior provisions deleted by this bill state that no increase or reduction in salary may take place after the election of the particular officer.

I believe that existing law is in the best public interest.

The salary of the officer must be known at the time he runs for the office. Furthermore, the public is entitled to know exactly what the elected officer is to receive in compensation at the time they are voting for that officer. By this bill, the change in salary could come after the election of a particular officer but before he begins his term. In other words, a board of commissioners could be re-elected for a new term and after their election they could raise their salary, and the voters would be deprived of the opportunity to express their sentiment on the increase in salary.

The State Constitution provides in Article III, section 27 for the prohibition similar to current law in the first class township code. The State Constitution sets the proper rule on these matters, and I do not believe that the first class townships should be allowed to deviate from that salutary rule.

For these reasons, I return Senate Bill No. 612 without my signature.

MILTON J. SHAPP