

Veto No. 1982-3

HB 178

December 29, 1982

To the Honorable, the House of Representatives
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

I hereby publicly proclaim, and file with the Secretary of the Commonwealth, my disapproval of House Bill 178, Printer's No. 3751. Although this bill makes numerous changes to the Liquor Code, I am vetoing it primarily because of a provision which would prohibit the initiation of enforcement proceedings based on anonymous complaints, unless those complaints involve underage drinking.

As a former Federal prosecutor, I have first-hand knowledge of the value of anonymous tips to law enforcement officials. I believe any abuses by some who anonymously, falsely report alleged violations are far outweighed by the legitimate reports received on serious violations such as serving those who are obviously intoxicated, smuggling, employment of minors, solicitation of patrons for immoral purposes, gambling, after-hour sales, and operation without a license.

The Liquor Control Board has a policing function with regard to the Commonwealth's liquor laws. According to the Board, over 95% of the complaints received are from individuals who wish to remain anonymous. To remove authority to act on anonymous complaints will serve as a disincentive to citizens who perform their public duty by reporting a violation.

For these reasons, and at the request of the Office of the Attorney General and the Liquor Control Board, I am withholding my approval of H.B. 178.

DICK THORNBURGH