



STATE OF DELAWARE
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JOHN CARNEY
GOVERNOR

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July 20, 2017

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE 149TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Pursuant to Article III, Section 18 of the Delaware Constitution, I am vetoing House Substitute No. 1 for House Bill No. 85 (HS 1 for HB 85) by returning it with my objections to the Delaware House of Representatives without my signature.

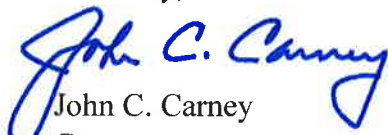
Educating our children is both a moral and an economic imperative, and the achievement gap in the State of Delaware is a problem that cannot be ignored. At-risk students across our state, but especially in the City of Wilmington, are not getting the education that they deserve. I believe that the sponsors of HS 1 for HB 85 wanted to expand options for students and increase diversity at Delaware charter schools by eliminating the five-mile radius as an enrollment preference. These are goals that I share.

Despite those efforts, this legislation unfairly excludes some of our most vulnerable students. It does not simply remove the five-mile radius preference. The legislation creates a new standard that uniquely limits options for at-risk students in the Christina School District portion of the City of Wilmington – many of the kids who need our help the most – and that is something I cannot support.

For too long, these students have attended schools that are not meeting their needs. This is a serious issue that is much larger than this bill. The achievement gap is a pervasive problem that – working with the General Assembly, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, the City of Wilmington and all appropriate stakeholders – my administration will take decisive action to address. This must also include serious conversations about the Christina School District's role in the City of Wilmington.

Let me be clear: I would sign this legislation if it simply removed the five-mile radius. However, for the reasons stated above, I am hereby vetoing House Substitute No. 1 for House Bill No. 85 by returning it to the House of Representatives without my signature.

Sincerely,


John C. Carney
Governor