

Governor Announces Pocket Veto of Taxpayers' Bill of Rights II Legislation

By

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During a conference call held Thursday afternoon with the lead House and Senate sponsors of the Alabama Taxpayers' Bill of Rights II legislation, SB 549, and several of its co-authors and other proponents, Governor Robert Bentley announced that he intends to pocket veto the bill, citing a technical error in the final form of the bill that went unnoticed until the session had adjourned. Several agreed-upon changes were mistakenly dropped from the bill immediately prior to its passage on the last night of the legislative session. On a positive note, however, the Governor expressed his firm support for the provisions creating an independent tax tribunal, known as the Alabama Tax Appeals Commission, and many of the other provisions of the bill. He committed to include the bill, as amended, in his call for a special session this Fall if the Legislature is convened to deal with the ongoing Jefferson County bankruptcy and financial crisis, or failing that, in the Spring 2013 regular session.

Since the bill was passed on the last night of the session, albeit with a decisive 33-0 vote in the Senate and a 95-1 vote in the House of Representatives, there was no opportunity for the Governor to offer an executive amendment to change the bill to his or his staff's satisfaction. Also, he need not affirmatively veto it; his deadline for signing the bill into law is Saturday, May 26. He told the participants on the conference call that he will not change his mind in the interim.

The sponsors and co-authors of the bill along with the President of the Alabama State Bar, the officers of several leading business associations and of the Alabama Society of CPAs, pledged to work with the Governor's staff to have the bill in agreed form even before the session convenes, whether that is a special session this Fall or the regular session next Spring.

The authors were two of the principal authors of the legislation.

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