

## THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE . BOSTON 02133



**MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS**  
GOVERNOR

TO THE HONORABLE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

In accordance with the provisions of Article LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am returning, herewith, House Bill No. 1292 entitled, "An Act Validating Certain Proceedings of the City of Taunton and Authorizing the City to Acquire Certain Land and Buildings for School Purposes, to Remodel and Equip Said Buildings and to Borrow Money for Said Purposes, and also Providing for State Aid in Connection Therewith."

House Bill No. 1292 authorizes the City of Taunton to purchase for school purposes land and buildings known as St. Joseph's school, and requires the Commonwealth to reimburse the city for the major portion of the costs of acquiring and reconstructing the building.

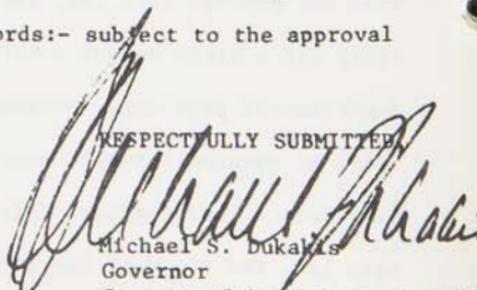
The Commissioner of Education has advised me that, if H 1292 were not enacted into law, the City of Taunton would be free to apply for a state school construction grant through the normal departmental procedure, pursuant to Chapter 645 of the Acts of 1948, as amended through Chapter 1018 of the Acts of 1973. The Commissioner has further advised me that, if H 1292 were enacted into law, the Board of Education would have little or no discretion to review this project in the customary manner and to apply

the same criteria that currently apply to all other school projects in the Commonwealth.

While I am not opposed to those provisions of H 1292 that authorize the City of Taunton to undertake this project, I am opposed to any attempt to gain state approval for this project, or any individual project, outside the normal administrative channels. The Department estimates that the cost to the state of this project will be about \$654,000. When expenditures of this magnitude are involved, the merits of each project, and its relationship to the overall purposes of the state's school building assistance program, must be fully evaluated by those most experienced in this field. If the state reimbursement for this particular project were explicitly made subject to the approval of the state Board of Education, as is the case with all similar projects, I would be able to approve this bill. (I am also advised by the Commissioner that the City of Taunton should consider modifying the financial provisions of H 1292 in the event that the Board of Education should find that an additional expenditure may be necessary to complete this project in accordance with its guidelines.)

I therefore recommend that House Bill No. 1292 be amended as follows: By inserting, in line two of section 4 of the engrossed bill, after the word "entitled" the words:- subject to the approval of the state Board of Education.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

  
Michael S. Dukakis  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts