



GOVERNOR OF MISSOURI

JEFFERSON CITY

65102

July 6, 2011

JEREMIAH W. (JAY) NIXON
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 720
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TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Herewith I return to you House Committee Substitute for Senate Substitute for Senate Bill No. 118, entitled:

AN ACT

To repeal sections 198.006 and 198.074, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections relating to sprinkler system requirements in long-term care facilities.

I disapprove of House Committee Substitute for Senate Substitute for Senate Bill No. 118. My reasons for disapproval are as follows:

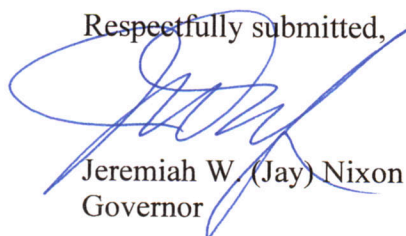
Legislation passed in 2007 required sprinkler systems for certain long-term care facilities. The critical need for this legislation was made clear when eleven individuals died in a fire at the Anderson Guest House in Anderson, Missouri, a group home for individuals with disabilities. The fire tore through the roof and engulfed an entire section of the building before firefighters arrived. Ten residents died of smoke inhalation, and one employee died while heroically attempting to save their lives.

House Committee Substitute for Senate Substitute for Senate Bill No. 118 would delay the date for installation of sprinkler systems by two years, until December 31, 2014. These institutions already have had four years to comply with this vital safety requirement, yet almost 100 facilities subject to the statute, with the capacity to care for over 4,000 of our citizens, remain without approved sprinkler systems today. That is unacceptable.

Under current law, these facilities still have nearly eighteen months to come into compliance. This bill would delay the date by which sprinklers must be installed by three and one-half years from today, and over eight years since the Anderson Guest House fire. Delaying the date by which these sprinkler systems must be installed for another two years places Missouri's seniors and individuals with disabilities at an unacceptable risk. As we saw with the tragedy in Anderson, this is a matter of life and death.

In accordance with the above stated reasons for disapproval, I am returning House Committee Substitute for Senate Substitute for Senate Bill No. 118 without my approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor