

May 5, 1998

Honorable Michael S. Baer, III
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 137 BY BARHAM

To amend and reenact R.S. 47:1516(B), (E), and (G), relative to tax debt collection; to authorize the secretary of the Department of Revenue to enter into contracts with debt collection agencies for the collection of certain in-state tax liabilities; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

Dear Mr. Baer:

Senate Bill Number 137 by Senator Robert Barham was filed at the request of the Department of Revenue to authorize the secretary to enter into contracts with debt collection agencies for the collection of certain in-state tax liabilities. The department's intention was to ask the legislature to approve this authority only in instances in which the debt has been established clearly and then only under very limited circumstances. After further discussions with the author and the secretary, we agree that this measure, which was approved as requested by the department, is in need of further refinement to address the most difficult collection cases, which are largely business taxes and not personal taxes, while at the same time do more to avoid its potential future use in a way not in the best interest of the taxpayers of the state of Louisiana. I have asked the department to work without delay with the author to tighten the provisions of this legislation and to look at all possible administrative means to improve the department's collection of such debts. For these reasons, I am vetoing Senate Bill No. 137 and I am returning the bill to you.

Sincerely,

M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

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