



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR

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VETO MESSAGE FROM THE
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
REGARDING HOUSE BILL 503 OF THE 2026 REGULAR SESSION

PART I, OPERATING BUDGET
A. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
1.(4) Legislators Compensation

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under section 88 of the Kentucky Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 2, lines 8 through 12, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because despite their part-time status under the Kentucky Constitution, the average annual compensation and reimbursements for Kentucky legislators is about \$75,000, more than the average annual income of Kentucky households. If legislators will not give our public school teachers and employees a raise, they shouldn't get one, either.

PART I, OPERATING BUDGET
A. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
TOTAL OPERATING BRANCH

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under section 88 of the Kentucky Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 3, lines 20-23, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it would allow the Legislative Branch to carryover any unspent General Fund dollars into the next fiscal year, setting aside the statute that requires the unspent money to lapse. At the end of the prior fiscal year, the legislative branch carried over \$53.5 million, which was 58% of its Fiscal Year 2026 enacted General Fund dollars. The legislative branch has so far refused to participate in the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund budget reduction plan and even has not even submitted a plan, which violates the 2024-2026 biennial budget law. Its refusal comes even though its proportionate share is about 1% of its \$91.9 million General Fund appropriation. Yet the Legislative Branch wants to keep the money it does not spend, while imposing cuts on the Executive Branch and the Judicial Branch that it does not levy on itself.

PART II, GENERAL PROVISIONS

2. Capitol and Capitol Annex Capital Construction Expenditures

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under section 88 of the Kentucky Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 4, lines 12 through 18, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because the Legislative Branch is not the Executive Branch and does not get to carry out executive functions like the renovation of state buildings, which is a primary job of the Finance and Administration Cabinet. This part would give the Director of the Legislative Research Commission and the Commission unchecked authority to spend taxpayer dollars in the Capitol and Capitol Annex construction without the oversight or input of the Capital Planning Advisory Board that has representation from all three branches of state government, without statutory limitations on project and equipment spending in the State Capital Construction Program, without any input from the Capital Projects and Bond Oversight Committee, and without meeting statutory budget requirements. The Legislative Branch would also have this sweeping power to spend state funds when the General Assembly is not in session and does not exist.

PART II, GENERAL PROVISIONS

10. Capitol and Capitol Annex Renovations

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under section 88 of the Kentucky Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 5, lines 15 through 26, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because the legislative branch is not the executive branch and does not get to carry out executive functions like the renovation of state buildings, which is a primary job of the Finance and Administration Cabinet. This part would give the Senate President and the House Speaker the authority to meet, consult and communicate with those working on the Capitol and Capitol Annex renovations about any aspect of those renovations without the Finance and Administration Cabinet, even when the legislature is not in session and has ceased to exist. These two legislators would have this power even if any statute or contractual terms or conditions would restrict it.

PART III, BUDGET REDUCTION OR SURPLUS EXPENDITURE PLAN

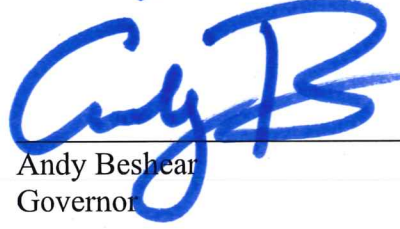
Page 7, line 13, after "Plan.", delete the rest of the line.

Page 7, line 14, in its entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it provides the Director of the Legislative Research Commission the discretion to determine the level of participation in a Budget Reduction Plan. This provision is in direct conflict with the sentence that precedes it and House Bill 500, Part VI-General Fund

Budget Reduction Plan, where it states that each head of the three branches of government shall prepare a specific plan to address the proportionate share of the General Fund revenue shortfall. In the current fiscal year, with an official estimate of a \$156 million revenue shortfall, the legislative branch has to-date refused to participate to help close the shortfall, which equates to just 1% of its General Fund budget. The General Assembly has more than \$53 million in unspent appropriations left over from the prior fiscal year.

This, the ^{13th} day of April, 2026.



Andy Beshear
Governor