



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 804 OF THE**  
**2024 REGULAR SESSION**

*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:*

House Bill 804 of the 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly in its entirety.

*I am vetoing House Bill 804 because it is an unconstitutional power grab. Like Senate Bill 126 passed over my veto a year ago and unanimously struck down by the Supreme Court of Kentucky last October, House Bill 804 violates the separation of powers in the Kentucky Constitution, creates an arbitrary process for selecting the venue of civil actions, and blocks Kentuckians' access to courts. The bill is also unconstitutional special legislation.*

*By allowing automatic transfer of venue merely on application – without any hearing or argument, and without applying any legal standard – House Bill 804 unconstitutionally infringes on the judicial branch of the Commonwealth. The Kentucky Supreme Court recently ruled that a bill that automatically granted a change in venue in these types of cases violated the Constitution's separation of powers (1) by granting unchecked power to a litigating party to remove a judge from a case under the guise of "transfer"; (2) by divesting the circuit court of its inherent jurisdiction and authority when and if a case should be transferred to another venue; and (3) by invading the Supreme Court's rule-making authority.*

*House Bill 804 again encroaches on the Kentucky Supreme Court's rulemaking authority and completely removes the decision of the appropriate venue from the Kentucky circuit courts. The automatic transfer of venue would also cause delay, and would raise costs for those challenging and defending the constitutionality of these governmental acts, forcing them to travel to a circuit court they did not choose.*

*For these reasons, I am vetoing House Bill 804.*

This, the 4<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Beshear". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Andy Beshear  
Governor