Governor Hogan vetoed approximately three dozen bills. All remaining bills went into effect without his signature. The Governor based the vetoes on the fact that the economic fallout from the pandemic makes it impossible to fund new programs, impose new tax hikes or adopt any new legislation with a fiscal impact, regardless of the merits of the legislation.

Included in the bills that were vetoed was *House Bill 1121: Maryland Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Registry and Referral System*. House Bill 1121 was strongly supported by ACEP and was the result of a workgroup convened by Delegate Pena-Melnyk. It passed both chambers unanimously. The purpose of the bill was to address the issue of "boarding" in emergency departments. The bill would have established a Maryland Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Registry and Referral System (and a related advisory committee) to provide a statewide system through which health care providers could identify and access available inpatient and outpatient mental health and substance use services for patients in a seamless manner. The projected cost for FY2021 was approximately $255,000 to account for staff and administrative costs for establishing the first phase of the program. While costs were projected to increase in FY2022, the fiscal projections did not take into account either the cost savings from moving individuals from the emergency department into more appropriate settings as well as other societal costs. At this point, the General Assembly will have the authority to override the veto when it reconvenes in January.

Other bills tracked by ACEP that were vetoed included House Bill 732: Taxation – Tobacco Tax, Sales and Use Tax, and Digital Advertising Gross Revenues Tax, which would have increased taxes on tobacco products and vaping products. While the tobacco tax bill was introduced as a stand-alone bill, it was later combined with other tax bills to create an omnibus bill.

Veto messages can be read at:

The Governor's veto message for House Bill 1121 can be read here.