



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 25 2020

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2164 without my signature.

This bill would authorize a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and Rural Health Center (RHC) to establish a relationship with a patient who is located within their service area by synchronous or asynchronous (store-and-forward) telehealth. AB 2164 would sunset 180 days after the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency has been terminated by the state of California.

While I am supportive of utilizing telehealth to increase access to primary and specialty care services, the Department of Health Care Services is currently in the process of evaluating its global telehealth policy to determine what temporary flexibilities should be extended beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes to FQHC and RHC telehealth is better considered within the context of a global assessment around telehealth in the state of California. Further, the cost of these changes is also more appropriately considered alongside other policy changes in the budget process next year.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom

