



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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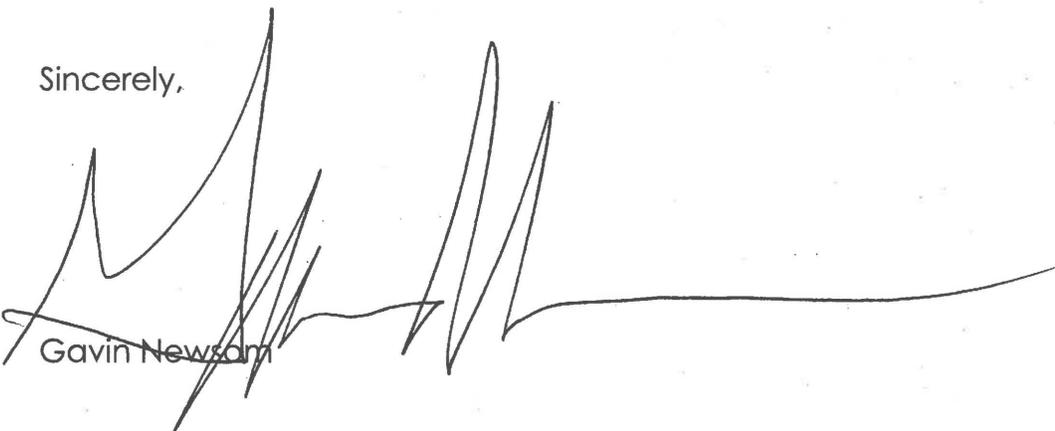
To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 279 without my signature.

This bill prohibits, until July 1, 2022, an intermediate care facility (ICF) or skilled nursing facility (SNF) from terminating or making significant quality-of-care changes, or from transferring a resident to another facility, unless the owner of the facility files for bankruptcy, except under specified circumstances.

Although this bill seeks to protect residents of ICFs and SNFs from involuntary transfers, its restrictions could have unintended consequences for the people it intends to serve. Requiring a struggling facility short of bankruptcy to remain open may lead to conditions where care is compromised because the facility is not able to retain staff. For example, facilities with inadequate staffing will struggle to implement measures to limit COVID-19 transmission and prevent outbreaks. Furthermore, the California Department of Public Health does not have the legal authority to compel a facility to continue operating or providing services if the facility wishes to close. For these reasons, I am returning this bill.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom