



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**SEP 19 2022**

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1965 without my signature.

This bill would require the California Department of Social Services to create and implement a new program under which able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) may receive state-funded nutrition assistance benefits if they are determined ineligible for federal nutrition assistance due to not meeting the federal ABAWD work rule.

I share the Author's interest in developing a solution to best serve the ABAWD population if and when they become ineligible for federal nutrition assistance. The Department has engaged and will continue to engage with counties and relevant stakeholders to safeguard access to federal nutrition assistance through existing federal percentage exemptions if and when the ABAWD work rule should go into effect again in California. The creation of a new system and process to address this issue is unnecessary at this time. Furthermore, this bill would require over \$100 million annually to implement which is not accounted for in the budget.

With our state facing lower-than-expected revenues over the first few months of this fiscal year, it is important to remain disciplined when it comes to spending, particularly spending that is ongoing. We must prioritize existing obligations and priorities, including education, health care, public safety and safety-net programs.



The Legislature sent measures with potential costs of well over \$20 billion in one-time spending commitments and more than \$10 billion in ongoing commitments not accounted for in the state budget. Bills with significant fiscal impact, such as this measure, should be considered and accounted for as part of the annual budget process. For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom