



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 25 2022

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2199 without my signature.

This bill would, subject to appropriation, establish the Birthing Justice for California Families Pilot Project and would fund a three-year grant program for community-based doula groups, local public health departments, and other organizations to provide doula care to members of communities with high rates of negative birth outcomes who are ineligible for Medi-Cal or are incarcerated.

I support the author's efforts to expand access to doula care to improve maternal and infant health outcomes, which is consistent with California's public health objectives. I proposed, and the 2021 Budget Act added, doula services as a covered benefit in Medi-Cal effective January 1, 2023. However, this bill establishes a new grant program creating over \$10 million in General Fund cost pressures 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gavin Newsom', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with a large initial 'G' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Gavin Newsom