



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 18 2022

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2281 without my signature.

This bill would establish the Early Childhood Mental Health Services Act, a grant program administered by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for the purpose of improving access to, and quality of, care, services, and supports for children up to five years of age, with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention and addressing disparities.

I share the author's concern about supporting youth mental health. Together with the Legislature, California has taken urgent action to address this crisis by investing over \$4.7 billion in the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative to ensure all California kids, parents and communities have increased access to mental health and substance use services. While the goal of this proposed grant program is laudable, it requires tens to hundreds of millions of dollars that were not appropriated in this year's Budget Act.

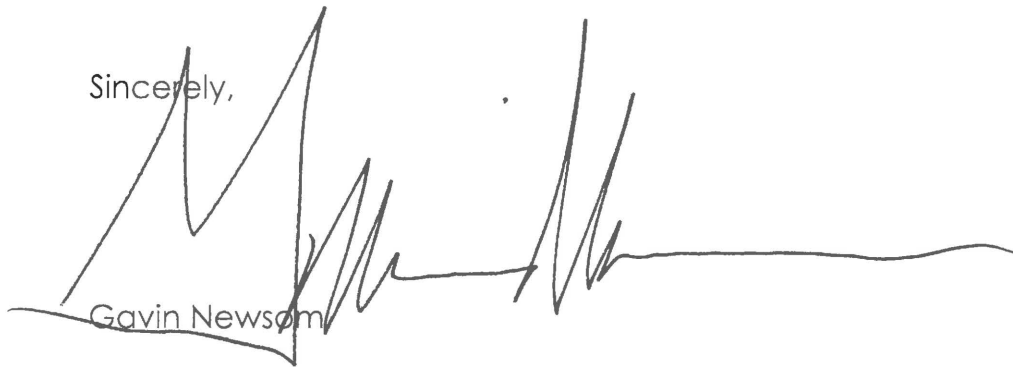
Furthermore, with our state facing lower-than-expected revenues over the first few months of this fiscal year, it is important to remain disciplined when it comes to spending, particularly spending that is ongoing. We must prioritize existing obligations and priorities, including education, health care, 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 with several loops and a long horizontal tail.

Gavin Newsom