To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2306 without my signature.

This bill would expand eligibility for the Independent Living Program (ILP) to current and former foster youth up to 22 years of age with intention to expand it further.

I commend the author’s commitment to ensuring foster youth are successful in their transition to adulthood and the supports and services foster youth receive from ILP teach them vital skills critical to achieving greater-self sufficiency prior to, and after leaving, the foster care system. While an expanded ILP would benefit more transition-aged youth, millions of dollars would be needed to implement the proposed expansion, and funds were not provided in the budget for this purpose.

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