



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 27 2022

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 964 without my signature.

This bill would require the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) to commission a report that examines the current landscape of the state's behavioral health workforce, and to convene a stakeholder group to participate in developing and drafting the report for submission to the Legislature by January 1, 2024.

I commend the author for their work to ensure that all Californian's behavioral health needs are met. One major component to meeting this need is through an adequate and well-trained workforce, which is why I worked with the Legislature to include in the 2022 Budget Act, \$248 million over 5 years to increase the number of licensed behavioral health professionals, including more than \$100 million to increase the number of social workers. This bill duplicates existing efforts in assessing workforce needs and analyzing trends through HCAI's Workforce Education and Training Council and its Workforce Research Data Center. Furthermore, this bill would require approximately \$1.5 million to implement, which was 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

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned over the printed name 'Gavin Newsom'.