



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 08 2023

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1288 without my signature.

This bill would prohibit health plans from requiring prior authorization or step therapy for a naloxone product or other opioid antagonist approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), buprenorphine product, methadone, or long-acting injectable naltrexone for detoxification or treatment of a substance use disorder.

I appreciate the author's intent to increase access to medication for opioid use disorder. My Administration takes the opioid crisis seriously, as evidenced by the over \$1 billion invested to combat overdoses, support those with opioid use disorder, raise awareness, and crack down on trafficking. However, utilization review is an important tool to contain health care costs, protect patients from unanticipated billing, and ensure medically necessary care. While immediacy of treatment is important, prior authorization also helps avoid fraudulent requests or abuse of the drugs addressed in this bill, such as methadone.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom

