



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 07 2023

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 469 without my signature.

This bill, subject to appropriation, would create the Office of the California Public Records Act Ombudsperson within state government. The ombudsperson would be appointed by the Governor, and would be tasked with determining whether denials of public records requests by state agencies complied with the California Public Records Act.

State agencies diligently comply with the Public Records Act, and relief is currently available through the courts for those who feel an agency's decision was incorrect. This bill would create an unnecessary layer of review by an official who would interpret the law in a manner that may or may not be consistent with case law. Additionally, establishment of this office would result in tens of millions of dollars in cost pressures not considered in the annual budget process.

In partnership with the Legislature, we enacted a budget that closed a shortfall of more than \$30 billion through balanced solutions that avoided deep program cuts and protected education, health care, climate, public safety, and social service programs that are relied on by millions of Californians. This year, however, the Legislature sent me bills outside of this budget process that, if all enacted, would add nearly \$19 billion of unaccounted costs in the budget, of which \$11 billion would be ongoing.

With our state facing continuing economic risk and revenue uncertainty, it is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications, such as this measure.



For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gavin Newsom', is written over the printed name. The signature is stylized and extends horizontally across the page.