OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 07 2023

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 403 without my signature.

This bill would define "ancestry" for purposes of the Fair Employment and Housing Act, the Unruh Act, and the Education Code to include "caste" and other dimensions of ancestry.

In California, we believe everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, no matter who they are, where they come from, who they love, or where they live. That is why California already prohibits discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics, and state law specifies that these civil rights protections shall be liberally construed. Because discrimination based on caste is already prohibited under these existing categories, this bill is unnecessary.

For this reason, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom