



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 20 2024

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2339 without my signature.

This bill would authorize Medi-Cal providers to establish a new patient using an asynchronous store-and-forward interaction, including through a mobile application, when the visit is related to sensitive services.

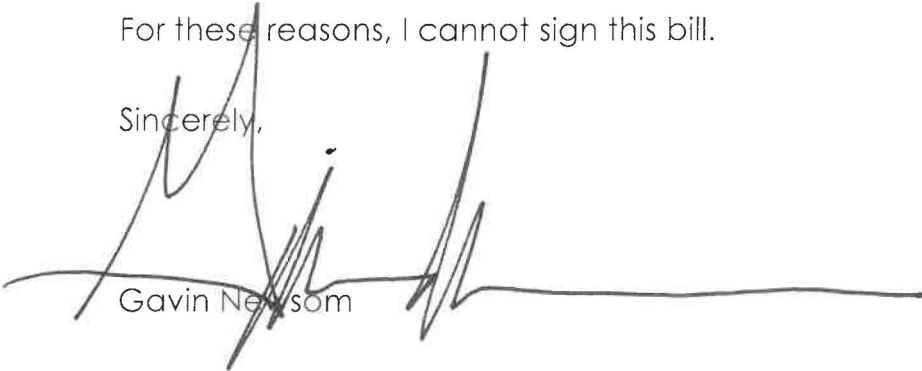
My Administration, in collaboration with the Legislature and the Telehealth Advisory Workgroup, worked to develop and implement one of the strongest telehealth policies in the country. Under the current Medi-Cal telehealth policy, licensed providers have substantial flexibility to make clinically appropriate decisions regarding the use of both synchronous and asynchronous telehealth modalities, and Medi-Cal pays the same rate for services provided via telehealth as services provided in-person.

I believe that robust telehealth policies increase access and reduce barriers to health care, including the use of asynchronous telehealth. However, there are details of a patient's medical history and personal health information that are best gathered during a synchronous appointment. For example, this bill would allow a patient to receive treatment and medications for reproductive and behavioral health services without ever seeing or talking directly to a provider. I believe that there are consumer protections provided through a live interaction between a patient and provider.



For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gavin Newsom', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat obscured by the line it crosses.

Gavin Newsom