



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**SEP 20 2024**

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2549 without my signature.

This bill would require a health facility to develop alternate visitation protocols that allow patient visitation to the greatest extent possible during circumstances that require restricted visitor access, and would require a facility to allow in-person visitation in end-of-life situations.

I believe there are many benefits to in-person visitation for people in health facilities who are sick, in recovery, or simply require a higher level of care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, state and local officials worked with public health and infectious disease experts to evaluate the risks and benefits of in-person interactions, and these standards were updated regularly as personal protective equipment, testing, and vaccines became available. California established a locally-driven response, where counties with fewer risks had higher flexibilities. This bill instead proposes a facility-by-facility approach. I am concerned that requiring facilities to develop individual, alternative protocols will result in confusion and create different access to patients based on each facility's management, rather than public health recommendations.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom", written over a printed name. The signature is stylized and extends across the width of the page.

Gavin Newsom

