



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**SEP 29 2024**

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2693 without my signature.

This bill would revive, for a one-year period, claims for childhood sexual assault committed by employees of county juvenile probation camps and detention facilities that would otherwise be barred by the statute of limitations.

I previously signed Assembly Bill 218 (Gonzalez, 2019), which revived expired childhood sexual assault claims for a three-year period that began on January 1, 2020, and ended on December 31, 2022. As a result, thousands of individuals were able to file suit for the alleged harm they suffered as children.

Last year, I signed Assembly Bill 452 (Addis, 2023), which eliminated the civil statute of limitations for incidents of childhood sexual assault that occur on or after January 1, 2024. That measure was meant to ensure, among other things, that all public and private entities take proactive steps to prevent children from being assaulted, quickly respond to reports of employee misconduct, and maintain records documenting their handling of these incidents.

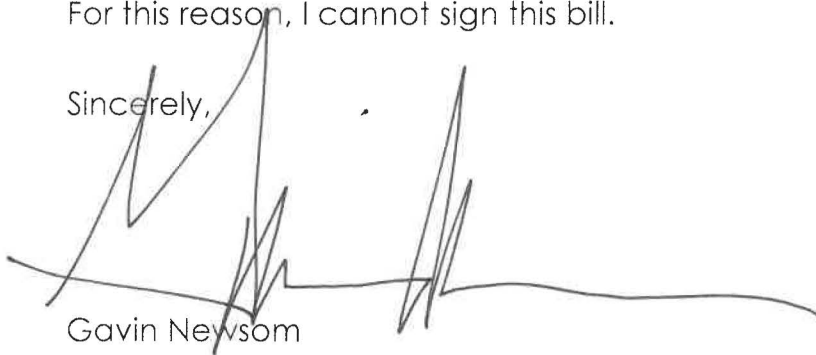
I deeply appreciate the intent of this bill and the importance of providing victims of childhood sexual assault a path to pursue justice. That is why I supported the important legislation referenced above, through which California provided all victims of childhood sexual assault with lapsed claims a three-year window to revive those claims and has eliminated the limitations period for such claims going forward.



However, I am concerned that again reviving the statute of limitations for these individuals, even for one year, will invite future legislation seeking to revive claims for other affected groups, both in the immediate future and in the years beyond. Statutes of limitations recognize that, as time passes, physical and documentary evidence may be lost and witnesses may die, no longer remember key facts, or otherwise no longer be available to testify, potentially prejudicing the ability of a party to present its case in court. Institutional employers are now on notice that childhood sexual assault claims are not subject to statutes of limitations going forward. But, having recently provided a three-year window for all victims of past abuse to bring claims, I am concerned that immediately reopening the claims period establishes a precedent for perpetually reopening claims periods for claims well in the past, for which key evidence may have been lost or no longer available.

For this reason, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with several sharp peaks and valleys. It is positioned to the right of the word 'Sincerely,' and above the printed name 'Gavin Newsom'.

Gavin Newsom