



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 22 2024

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 544 without my signature.

This bill would require the Secretary of State to create a grant program for San Benito, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz counties to develop in-person voter programs in jail facilities.

While I appreciate the author's commitment to this issue, under the Elections Code, counties are able to establish these types of programs without statutory authority. Further, this bill creates a new, unfunded grant program and should be considered in the annual budget process.

In partnership with the Legislature this year, my Administration has enacted a balanced budget that avoids deep program cuts to vital services and protected investments in education, health care, climate, public safety, housing, and social service programs that millions of Californians rely on. It is important to remain disciplined when considering bills with significant fiscal implications that are not included in the budget, 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', written over the printed name. The signature is stylized and somewhat messy, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.