



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 20 2024

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 804 without my signature.

This bill would allow law enforcement civilians to offer hearsay testimony at preliminary hearings, expanding an exception currently allowed for law enforcement officers.

While I appreciate the author's intent to conserve law enforcement resources, the bill raises concerns about the reliability of evidence presented at a critical stage of criminal proceedings, in which decisions are made regarding whether probable cause exists to charge defendants with felonies.

Proposition 115, the Crime Victims Justice Reform Act, created a narrow exception to the general prohibition on admissibility of hearsay testimony at preliminary hearings, largely to avoid forcing victims to appear multiple times through the criminal proceeding. This bill expands that exception to non-sworn employees of a law enforcement agency, which may reduce the reliability of the preliminary hearing process and diminish public trust in the fairness of our legal system.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,



Gavin Newsom

