



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 30 2026

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 1949 without my signature.

This bill would require Medi-Cal to cover up to 24 acupuncture visits per calendar year for each Medi-Cal member and allow additional acupuncture visits beyond that limit.

I appreciate the author's intent to ensure vulnerable populations maintain access to acupuncture as a treatment option. To that end, Medi-Cal already covers up to two acupuncture services per month, and the Department of Health Care Services can administratively update Medi-Cal policy to align with the generally accepted standard of care without the need for legislation. Further, I do not believe it is appropriate to legislate additional visit requirements outside the annual budget process due to its impact on utilization and costs.

In partnership with the Legislature this year, my administration has enacted a balanced budget that recognizes the challenging fiscal landscape our state faces while maintaining our commitment to working families and our most vulnerable communities. With significant fiscal pressures and the federal government's hostile economic policies, it is vital that we 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

