



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 30 2026

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 903 without my signature.

This bill would prohibit the use of companion chatbots in the provision of psychotherapy services and would create restrictions on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) by licensed professionals who provide psychotherapy services.

I support the author's intent to establish guardrails for the use of AI in healthcare settings, and recently signed legislation to mitigate bias and ensure emerging technologies enhance, rather than undermine, the delivery of safe and effective care. When thoughtfully implemented, AI tools can give clinicians more time for meaningful interaction with patients, or provide capacity to see additional patients and increase access to care.

Unfortunately, this bill is overly broad and would drastically limit a clinician's use of tools that benefit the delivery of care today, including by requiring routine screening determinations to receive direct approval. Additionally, this bill's broad definition of "psychotherapy services" is poorly crafted and would capture general-purpose AI systems not even structured or deployed to deliver that care.

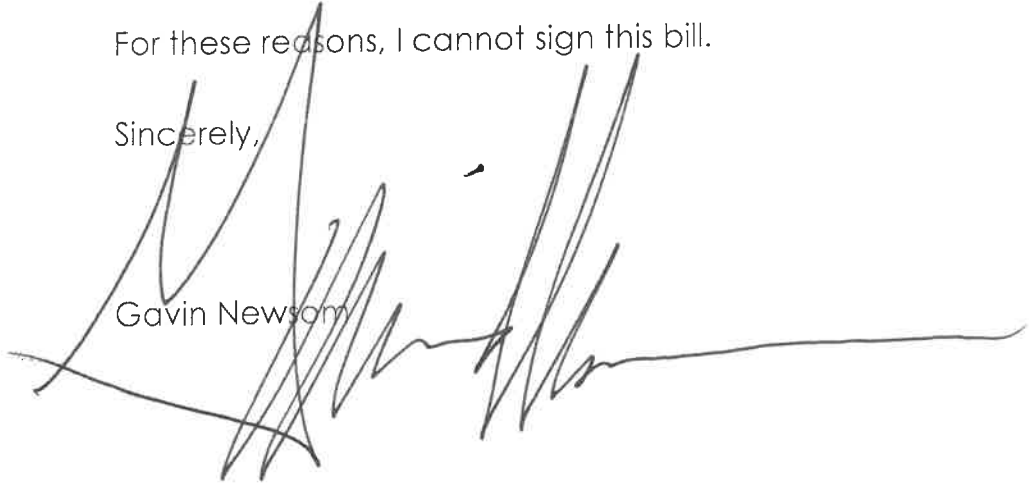


I encourage the author and stakeholders to revisit this issue next year to find a solution that ensures professional judgment is not replaced, while still allowing licensed professionals to use tools that enhance their delivery of quality care.

For these reasons, I cannot sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Gavin Newsom", is written over the printed name and extends across the page.