



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 25 2020

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 980 without my signature.

This bill would establish requirements for direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies, providing opt-in privacy rights and protections for consumers.

I share the perspective that the sensitive nature of human genetic data warrants strong privacy rights and protections.

However, the broad language in this bill risks unintended consequences, as the "opt-in" provisions of the bill could interfere with laboratories' mandatory requirement to report COVID-19 test outcomes to local public health departments, who report that information to the California Department of Public Health. This reporting requirement is critical to California's public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we cannot afford to unintentionally impede that effort.

Because I agree with the primary goal of this bill, I am directing the California Health and Human Services Agency and the Department of Public Health to work with the Legislature on a solution that achieves the privacy aims of the bill while preventing inadvertent impacts on COVID-19 testing efforts.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom

