



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

OCT 12 2013

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 921 without my signature.

Among its provisions, the bill would allow any social worker to comment on any child welfare services policy, procedure and practice, or any publicly released child fatality case, with impunity.

While this bill has the best of intentions, it overreaches. The judgment of social workers should be valued, but we don't need a law to protect their opinions, and theirs alone. Social workers, like other public or private employees, already have "whistleblower" protections for illegal acts they report. Specific county policies and practices that are legal but problematic should be resolved at the county level, or through legislation as a last resort, when counties cannot do it on their own.

Social workers, the state and counties all have a duty to protect children who are abused and neglected. We should all work together in good faith to that end.

Sincerely,


Edmund G. Brown Jr.