



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SEP 30 2014

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 924 without my signature.

This bill would extend the time a victim may bring a civil child sex abuse case from age 26 to age 40.

Until 1990, the statute of limitations for civil cases involving sex abuse against a minor was within one year of the victim's 18th birthday. That law was changed in 1990 to allow a claim against the perpetrator up until the victim's 26th birthday. It was expanded again in 1998 to allow a claim up to age 26 against third parties, and yet again in 2002 to allow a delayed-discovery claim against third parties.

Statutes of limitations exist as a matter of fundamental fairness. As I wrote last year, there comes a time when an individual or organization should be secure in the reasonable expectation that past acts are indeed in the past and not subject to further lawsuits. With the passage of time, evidence may be lost or disposed of, memories fade and witnesses move away or die.

There needs to be a compelling reason to lengthen the statute of limitations for civil claims against third parties. I do not see evidence of that here.

Sincerely,


Edmund G. Brown Jr.