

OCTOBER 1, 2014

## How Often Do Governors Say No?

*Each bill passed by the Legislature shall be presented to the Governor. It becomes a statute if it is signed by the Governor. The Governor may veto it by returning it with any objections to the house of origin, which shall enter the objections in the journal and proceed to reconsider it.* ~ California Constitution, Article IV, §10 (a)

- Governor Brown vetoed his second lowest percentage of bills (13.31%) since returning to office in 2011. His lowest veto percentage was last year (2013) at 10.71%; his highest veto percentage was the first year of his third term (2011) at 14.37%.
- Governor Brown's average veto rate (12.61%) during his current term (2011–14) is higher than his veto rate during his first two terms (4.63%).
- This year Governor Brown considered 1,074 bills, the most he has considered since beginning his third term and the most bills considered since Schwarzenegger considered 1,177 bills in 2008.
- Governor Deukmejian considered 14,828 bills during his eight years in office; Governor Brown has considered 15,242 during his 12 years in office.
- Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed more than a quarter (26.40%) of the 7,461 bills that reached him over his seven years in office.
- Schwarzenegger signed the lowest average number of bills: 784 per year over seven years.
- Governor Brown's veto percentage in 2014 (13.31%) is just below the average percentage since 1967 (13.72%).
- In 1982, Governor Brown vetoed just 30 bills of the 1,674 he considered, setting the record for the fewest vetoes and the lowest veto rate (1.79%).
- Governor Pat Brown acted on about 9,935 bills during his two terms as governor (1959–66). He vetoed—including “pocket vetoes”<sup>\*</sup>—685 bills (6.49%).
- Governor Deukmejian vetoed the most bills: 2,298 over eight years. However, with 1,970 vetoes over his seven years in office, Governor Schwarzenegger's annual average of 281 vetoes per year is close to Governor Deukmejian's annual average of 287 vetoes per year.
- Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed more than three times as many bills in seven years (1,970) as Governor Brown did in his first eight years (528), and more than twice as many as Governor Reagan in eight years (843).
- The five years with the most chaptered bills were all with Republican governors (1971, 1984, 1967, 1990, 1988). The five years with the most vetoed bills (1990, 2008, 1988, 2000, 1998) were with Republican governors, except for Governor Davis in 2000.

<sup>\*</sup> From 1849 until voters passed Proposition 1A in 1966, governors could stop bills from becoming law by holding onto them. Proposition 1A ended the use of the so-called pocket veto by amending the California Constitution. If a governor neither signs nor vetoes a bill, the bill becomes law and is considered “chaptered.” In the 1990s each house of the California Legislature introduced “bill limits” for each member. Currently, the limit is set at 40 bills in a two-year session.

### Most Chaptered Bills

1,821	1971	Reagan
1,760	1984	Deukmejian
1,725	1967	Reagan
1,707	1990	Deukmejian
1,647	1988	Deukmejian
1,644	1982	Brown

### Fewest Chaptered Bills

652	2009	Schwarzenegger
729	2005	Schwarzenegger
733	2010	Schwarzenegger
745	2011	Brown
750	2007	Schwarzenegger
763	2008	Schwarzenegger

### Most Vetoes

436	1990	Deukmejian
414	2008	Schwarzenegger
372	1988	Deukmejian
362	2000	Davis
351	1998	Wilson
336	1992	Wilson

### Fewest Vetoes

30	1982	Brown
35	1981	Brown
49	1978	Brown
58	2003	Davis
60	1979	Brown
61	1968	Reagan

### Highest Percent Vetoeed

35.17	2008	Schwarzenegger
28.77	2010	Schwarzenegger
27.00	2009	Schwarzenegger
24.91	2000	Davis
24.58	2004	Schwarzenegger
24.53	1998	Wilson

### Lowest Percent Vetoeed

1.79	1982	Brown
2.87	1981	Brown
3.31	1978	Brown
3.97	1968	Reagan
4.40	1979	Reagan
4.43	1980	Brown

### Who Considered the Most Bills?

2,143	1990	Deukmejian
2,063	1984	Deukmejian
2,019	1988	Deukmejian
1,975	1971	Reagan
1,808	1967	Reagan

### Who Considered the Fewest Bills?

870	2011	Brown
893	2009	Schwarzenegger
896	2013	Brown
961	2005	Schwarzenegger
964	2007	Schwarzenegger

### Who Signed the Most Bills as Governor?

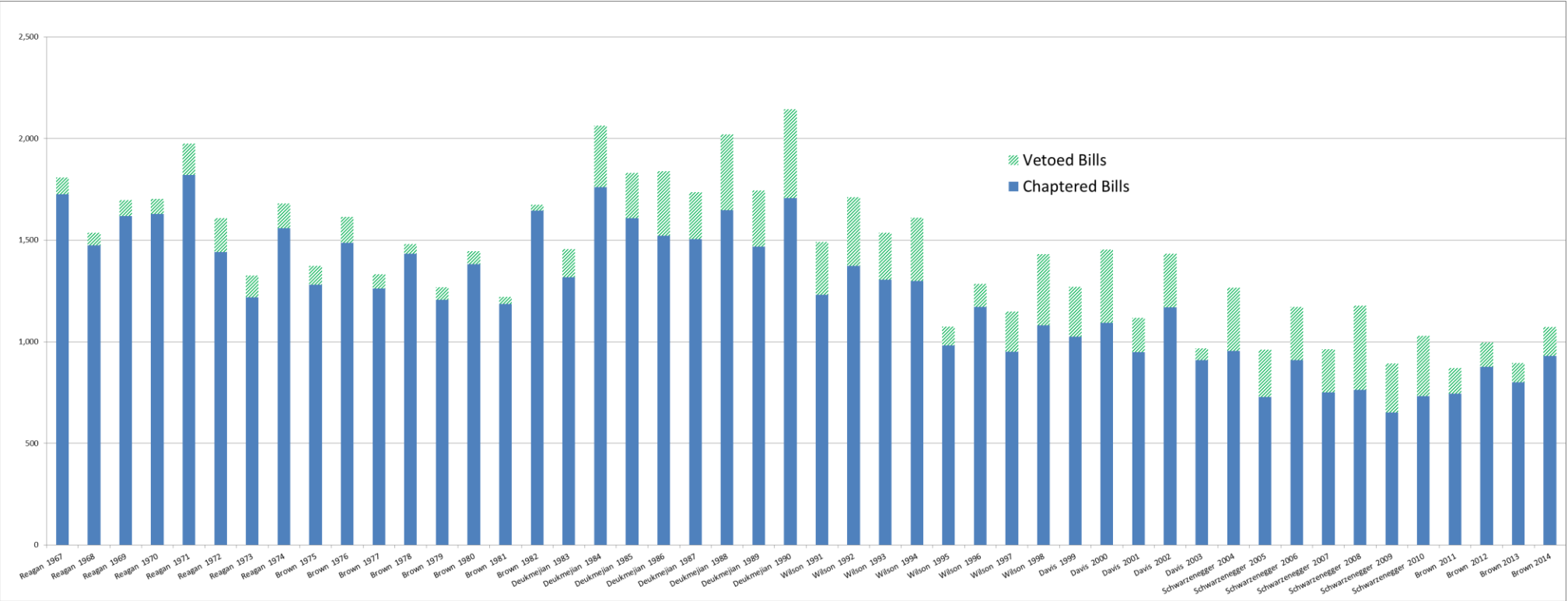
Brown	14,227	(1975–82; 2011–14)
Deukmejian	12,530	(1983–90)
Reagan	12,486	(1967–74)
Wilson	9,394	(1991–98)
Schwarzenegger	5,491	(2004–10)
Davis	5,144	(1999–03)

### Who Vetoeed the Most Bills as Governor?

Deukmejian	2,298	(1983–90)
Schwarzenegger	1,970	(2004–10)
Wilson	1,890	(1991–98)
Brown	1,012	(1975–82; 2011–14)
Davis	1,098	(1999–03)
Reagan	843	(1967–74)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Governor</b>	<b>Chaptered Bills</b>	<b>Vetoed</b>	<b>Total Bills</b>	<b>Percent Vetoed</b>
1967	Reagan	1,725	83	1,808	4.59
1968	Reagan	1,474	61	1,535	3.97
1969	Reagan	1,619	78	1,697	4.60
1970	Reagan	1,628	75	1,703	4.40
1971	Reagan	1,821	154	1,975	7.80
1972	Reagan	1,442	165	1,607	10.27
1973	Reagan	1,218	107	1,325	8.08
1974	Reagan	1,559	120	1,679	7.15
1975	Brown	1,280	93	1,373	6.77
1976	Brown	1,487	127	1,614	7.87
1977	Brown	1,261	70	1,331	5.26
1978	Brown	1,432	49	1,481	3.31
1979	Brown	1,207	60	1,267	4.74
1980	Brown	1,381	64	1,445	4.43
1981	Brown	1,186	35	1,221	2.87
1982	Brown	1,644	30	1,674	1.79
1983	Deukmejian	1,317	138	1,455	9.48
1984	Deukmejian	1,760	303	2,063	14.69
1985	Deukmejian	1,607	224	1,831	12.23
1986	Deukmejian	1,521	318	1,839	17.29
1987	Deukmejian	1,504	231	1,735	13.31
1988	Deukmejian	1,647	372	2,019	18.42
1989	Deukmejian	1,467	276	1,743	15.83
1990	Deukmejian	1,707	436	2,143	20.35
1991	Wilson	1,231	259	1,490	17.38
1992	Wilson	1,374	336	1,710	19.65
1993	Wilson	1,306	229	1,535	14.92
1994	Wilson	1,299	311	1,610	19.32
1995	Wilson	982	93	1,075	8.65
1996	Wilson	1,171	114	1,285	8.87
1997	Wilson	951	197	1,148	17.16
1998	Wilson	1,080	351	1,431	24.53
1999	Davis	1,025	246	1,271	19.35
2000	Davis	1,092	362	1,454	24.90
2001	Davis	948	169	1,117	15.13
2002	Davis	1,170	263	1,433	18.35
2003	Davis	909	58	967	6.00
2004	Schwarzenegger	954	311	1,265	24.58
2005	Schwarzenegger	729	232	961	24.14
2006	Schwarzenegger	910	262	1,172	22.35
2007	Schwarzenegger	750	214	964	22.20
2008	Schwarzenegger	763	414	1,177	35.17
2009	Schwarzenegger	652	241	893	26.99
2010	Schwarzenegger	733	296	1,029	28.77
2011	Brown	745	125	870	14.37
2012	Brown	876	120	996	12.05
2013	Brown	800	96	896	10.71
2014	Brown	931	143	1074	13.31

# CHAPTERED AND VETOED BILLS: 1967–2014



# Notes

- This veto tally includes only bills from Regular Sessions, not bills from Extraordinary Sessions.
- The Chaptered Bills column featured earlier includes bills a governor allowed to become law without a signature; see California Constitution, Article IV, §10 (b)(3). For example, in 2000, Governor Davis signed 1,088 bills and allowed four measures to become law without his signature for a total of 1,092 chaptered bills. In 2011, Governor Brown allowed one bill to become law without his signature, and this year (2014), Governor Brown also allowed one bill to become law without his signature. No bills became law without his signature in 2012 or 2013.
- The Chaptered Bills column for 2010 includes four bills signed by Lieutenant Governor Abel Maldonado, who was serving as Acting Governor.
- The numbers of chaptered bills are from the bound statutes for each year, plus information from the Office of the Governor. The numbers of vetoes are from file records kept in the Office of the Governor.
- Robert Williams, Deputy Legislative Secretary in several administrations, started those files in the 1950s. In subsequent administrations, the governor's legislative staff has maintained the files that Williams started; see the end of this report for those sources.

# Sources

- Originally prepared December 22, 1998, by Peter Detwiler, with additional research by Karen Morgan, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Pete Wilson.
- Revised October 11, 2000, with the assistance of Jane Leonard Brown, Committee Assistant.
- Revised December 11, 2000, to correct computational errors, with the assistance of Casey Elliott, Office of Governor Gray Davis, and Jane Leonard Brown, Committee Assistant.
- Revised October 17, 2001, with the assistance of Mike Gotch, Legislative Secretary to Governor Gray Davis, and Elvia Diaz, Committee Assistant.
- Revised October 2, 2002, with the assistance of Mike Gotch, Legislative Secretary to Governor Gray Davis.
- Revised October 14, 2003, with the assistance of Casey Elliott, Senior Legislative Assistant, Office of Governor Gray Davis.
- Revised September 30, 2004, with the assistance of Cynthia Bryant, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised October 11, 2005, with the assistance of Cynthia Bryant, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised October 6, 2006, with the assistance of Cynthia Bryant, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised October 15, 2007, with the assistance of Mikhael Skvarla, Legislative Assistant to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised (and revised again to correct data errors) on October 1, 2008, with the assistance of Mikhael Skvarla, Legislative Assistant to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised October 12, 2009, with the assistance of Jacque Roberts, Assistant Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised January 13, 2010, with the assistance of Jacque Roberts, Assistant Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, to reflect the 21 Regular Session bills passed and acted on during fall 2009.
- Revised October 1, 2010, with the assistance of Jacque Roberts, Assistant Legislative Secretary to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Revised October 10, 2011, by Gayle Miller, with the assistance of the Senate Committee on Governance and Finance and Jacque Roberts, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Jerry Brown.

- Revised October 1, 2012, with the assistance of the Senate Committee on Governance and Finance and Jacque Roberts, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Jerry Brown.
- Revised October 14, 2013, with the assistance of the Senate Committee on Governance and Finance and Jacque Roberts, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Jerry Brown.
- Revised October 1, 2014, with the assistance of the Senate Office of Research and Jacque Roberts, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Jerry Brown.