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From the Los Angeles Times

## Sign these bills, governor

Here are some tips on what to do with a few of those many bills sitting on Schwarzenegger's desk

October 10, 2007

It was not a banner year for the Legislature, which missed its budget deadline by more than two months and descended into partisan bickering. It may be because lawmakers had fewer dollars to work with than expected. Or, perhaps, the unusually high turnover last year, spurred by term limits, turned into a large class of freshman Assembly members who were still getting the hang of their jobs.

Still, lawmakers passed more than 900 bills. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed many and vetoed a few, but he has hundreds more on his desk that he must act on before Oct. 14.

Here are a few he should sign:

**AB 1324**, by Assemblyman Hector De La Torre (D-South Gate): As the governor continues to lead the debate on healthcare reform, he can make sure insurance companies become part of the solution by signing this bill to prevent them from retroactively rescinding policies and revoking payment authorization after treatment has begun. Insurers would have to prove that applicants lied about any preexisting conditions before canceling coverage under these circumstances.

**AB 1334**, by Assemblyman Sandre Swanson (D-Alameda): This bill would help reduce the spread of HIV infections in prison by permitting the distribution of condoms. So what's the holdup? To distribute condoms is to acknowledge that inmates are having sex. But the rapid spread of HIV in prison should also be a clue that there is sex in prison, unlawful though it may be. If wardens can't stop prison sex -- and they can't -- they should at least be able to make it less deadly.

**AB 1331**, by Assemblywoman Noreen Evans (D-Santa Rosa): Far too many foster children become homeless when they reach 18 because they aren't connected with services that taxpayers already provide. This sensible bill would require state or county workers to screen foster children before they emancipate to determine who is eligible for Supplemental Security Income, and would provide for help in filling out the requisite forms.

**SB 511**, by Sen. Elaine Alquist (D-Santa Clara): This bill from the California Commission on the Administration of Justice helps combat false or coerced confessions by requiring that all interrogations made in custody be recorded.

And here's one the governor ought to veto:

**SB 7**, by Jenny Oropeza (D-Long Beach). Adults should not smoke; they certainly shouldn't smoke around kids; and they most definitely should not smoke in a car with a child. That's different from saying such an irresponsible act should be against the law. It's hard to see how children would be better off with cigarettes banned from cars while their parents can still smoke up a storm at home. Laws that ban smoking in public places are enforceable. Laws that extend tobacco prohibition to private cars are an example of good intentions gone awry.

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