

**Senate Committee on Governance & Finance**  
**State Capitol, Room 408, Sacramento, California 95814**

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<http://sgf.senate.ca.gov/>

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**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)

- Brown vetoed a lower percentage of bills in 2012 (12%) than in 2011 (14%), but in both years his veto rates were higher than during his first two terms as Governor (4.4% average over 8 years).
- Brown's veto percentage in 2012 (12%) is below the average percentage since 1967 (13%).
- Deukmejian and Schwarzenegger still hold the record for the most bills vetoed in a year, 436 (1990) and 414 (2008) respectively.
- The Governor had 30-days to act on bills passed by the Legislature on or after August 20, 2012; before that date, the Governor had 12-days to act. This year, 77% (767) of bills acted on were in the 30-day period.
- In 1982, Brown vetoed just 30 bills of the 1,674 he considered, setting the record for the lowest number of vetoes.
- Governor Pat Brown acted on about 7,500 bills during his two terms as Governor (1960-66). He vetoed (including "pocket vetoes") 512 bills, or about 6%<sup>1</sup>.
- The five years with the fewest chaptered bills have all been since 2007.
- Deukmejian vetoed the most bills (2,298 over eight years). However, with 1,970 vetoes over his seven years in office, Schwarzenegger's average (281) is close to Deukmejian's average of 287 vetoes per year.
- Schwarzenegger vetoed over three times as many bills in his seven years (1,970) as Brown did in his first eight years (528), and twice as many as Reagan did in eight years (843).
- On average, since 1967, the Legislature has sent the Governor 1,444 bills. In 2011, the Legislature gave the Governor the lowest number of bills of any single year (870). This Legislature over the 2011-12 two-year session gave the Governor fewer bills to consider than during any other two-year since 1967.
- Having signed 876 bills this year, Governor Brown has signed 12,744 bills in his 10 years as Governor, which is a higher total than any of his predecessors since 1967. Brown's veto total (773) is the lowest among all Governors since 1967.

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<sup>1</sup> From 1849 until the voters passed Proposition 1A (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.

**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
961	2005	Schwarzenegger
964	2007	Schwarzenegger
967	2003	Davis

**Who signed the most bills as Governor?**

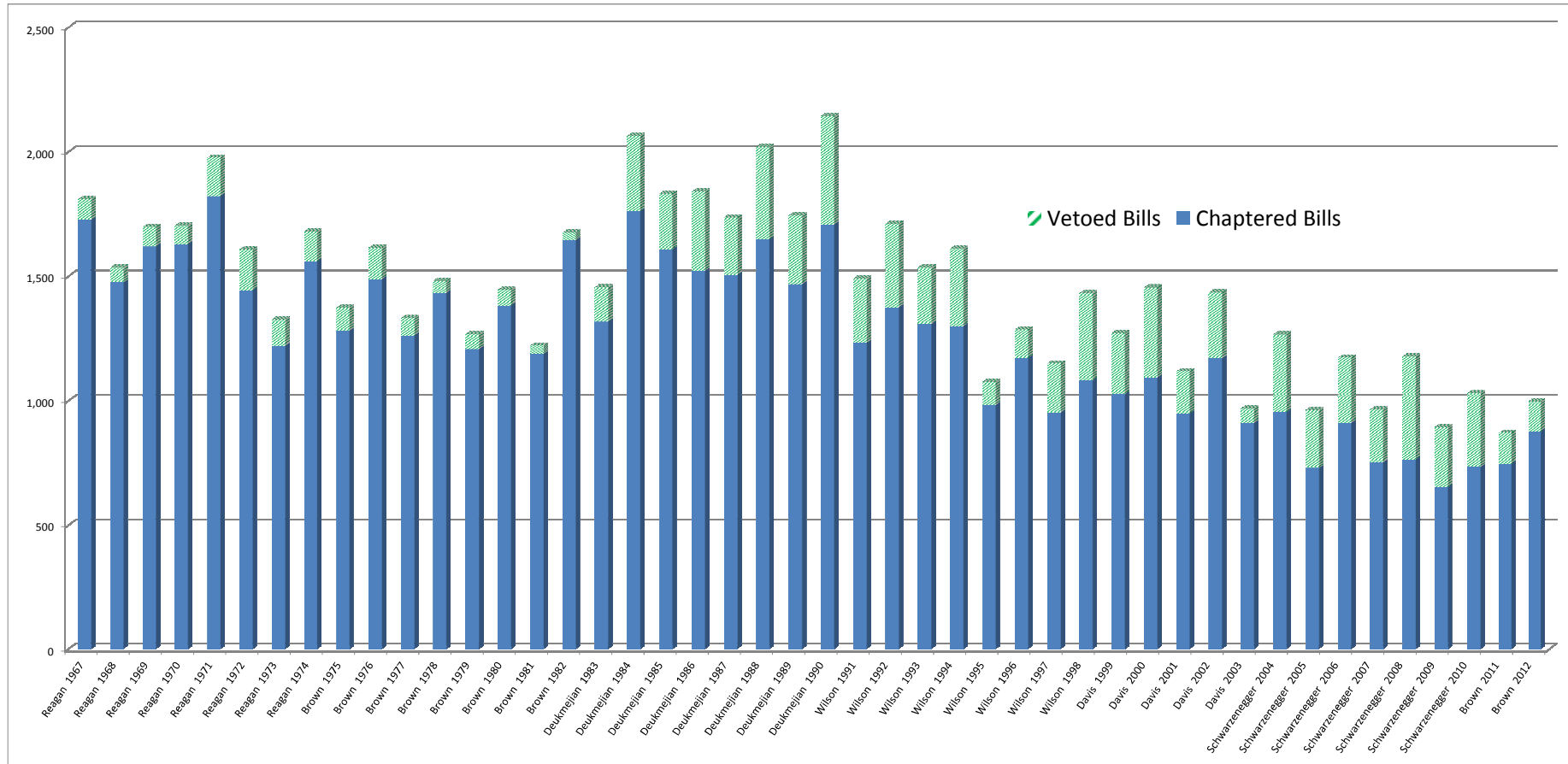
Brown	12,744	(1975-82; 11-12)
Deukmejian	12,530	(1983-90)
Reagan	12,486	(1967-74)
Wilson	9,394	(1991-98)
Schwarzenegger	5,491	(2004-10)
Davis	5,144	(1999-03)

**Who vetoed the most bills as Governor?**

Deukmejian	2,298	(1983-90)
Schwarzenegger	1,970	(2004-10)
Wilson	1,890	(1991-98)
Davis	1,098	(1999-03)
Reagan	843	(1967-74)
Brown	773	(1975-82; 11-12)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Governor</u>	<u>Chaptered Bills</u>	<u>Vetoes</u>	<u>Total Bills</u>	<u>Percent Vetoes</u>
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	27.00
2010	Schwarzenegger	733	296	1,029	28.77
2011	Brown	745	125	870	14.37
2012	Brown	876	120	996	12.05

# Chaptered and Vetoed Bills: 1967-2012



## Notes

This information only counts the bills from regular sessions, not the bills in Extraordinary Sessions.

The “Chaptered Bills” column on page 3 includes bills that a governor allowed to become law without 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.

For 2010, the “Chaptered Bills” column on page 3 includes four bills signed by Lieutenant Governor Abel Maldonado, as Acting Governor.

The numbers of chaptered bills come from the bound statutes for each year, plus information from the Office of the Governor. The numbers of vetoes come 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 page 5 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.

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Revised October 10, 2011 by Gayle Miller with the assistance of the Senate Committee on Governance & Finance and Jacque Roberts, Deputy Legislative Secretary to Governor Jerry Brown.

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