



national asian pacific american women's forum

napawf

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Vote NO on Proposition 85! *Talking Points*

Background:

Last year, California voters defeated Proposition 73 because they knew that it would endanger the health and safety of young girls by interfering with their ability to access reproductive health care services in a timely manner. Despite this defeat, a new parental notification bill called the "*The Child Protection Act*," whose language mirrors Proposition 73, is on the ballot this November.

What is Proposition 85?

Proposition 85 would change the California Constitution to require a doctor to notify a minor's parent or guardian at least 48 hours before performing an abortion. Parental notification would not be required in two circumstances:

- (1) in the case of a medical emergency or
- (2) if the young woman gets approval from a judge.

Physicians would also be required to report every abortion performed to the State Department of Health Services so that the state has a record of the number of abortions performed, the county/city, age, types, etc...

Proposition 85 Harms API Teens and Families:

In a perfect world, all Asian Pacific Islander (API) teens would be able to discuss issues related to sexuality, contraception, abortion and reproductive health care with their parents. In fact, many teens do involve their parents in these conversations. Thus, Proposition 85 would have little impact on these teens and families.

For those API teens who cannot talk to their parents, however, Proposition 85 would have detrimental consequences for their overall health and economic well-being because it would delay medical care and put teens who live in abusive homes in danger. Moreover, seeking permission from a judge may be difficult, time-consuming and impractical. All women and girls should have the ability to exercise control over their bodies and make decisions about whether to become a parent in a just and supportive environment.

Consider some of these facts and circumstances...

- Teen pregnancy is on the rise in particular API ethnic subpopulations. A California study found that Laotian American teens had the highest teen birth rate in the state.



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- In many API communities, issues related to sexual behavior and birth control are taboo subjects, and are not discussed openly or publicly. In fact, communicating about sex is tantamount to “airing one’s private laundry.”
- Many pregnant API teens cannot talk to their parents because of shame, embarrassment, abuse, or fear of getting kicked out of their home. As a result, they may end up delaying care, traveling out of state in secret to seek an abortion, or resorting to more dangerous options.
- Because of immigration restrictions, financial barriers and language differences, many low-income immigrant API teens have limited access to sexual and reproductive health care services and resources, which can delay their decision to seek an abortion.
- Asking a judge for permission to have an abortion may be an unrealistic option for many API teens, particularly those who are low-income, undocumented or speak little English. The process is complicated, confusing and lengthy.
- Many immigrant and refugee API teens and their families come to the U.S. to seek better educational and employment opportunities. It is imperative that teens have the ability to make real choices about their reproductive health care so that they can achieve their goals and dreams.

Proposition 85, along with the lack of linguistically and culturally competent sexuality education and prohibiting young women under 18 from accessing emergency contraception over-the-counter all represent attempts to limit the choices available to young women, which prevents them from making well-informed decisions about their overall sexual and reproductive health.

What You Can Do:

- ✓ Learn more about Proposition 85 by participating in a forum with NAPAWF staff on October 24, 2006 in the Bay Area! (*Details to follow.*)
- ✓ Partner with local community groups such as Khmer Girls in Action (KGA) and Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice and organize activities to educate your community about the dangers of Proposition 85. In particular, KGA is looking for volunteers to walk the precincts and phone bank in Long Beach, CA.
- ✓ Participate in Get-Out-the-Vote efforts (e.g., phone banking, poll monitoring) to encourage people to vote in November.
- ✓ Write op-eds, letters to the editor and articles about why you oppose Proposition 85 and how it hurts API teens.
- ✓ Forward this fact sheet to at least 3 friends or family members!

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The National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum is the only national, multi-issue APA women’s advocacy organization in the country. NAPAWF’s mission is to build a movement to advance social justice and human rights for APA women and girls.