



national asian pacific american women's forum

napawf

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Hyde Amendment – 30 Years is Enough! Campaign

Campaign lead by the National Network of Abortion Funds (NNAF)

In 1973, the Supreme Court held in Roe v. Wade, that the constitutional right of personal privacy includes the decision to have an abortion. After Roe legalized abortions, federal Medicaid paid for approximately 270,000 abortions out of a total of 615,800. During the next few years, state and federal Medicaid paid for about one-third of all abortions. Only three years later, however, in 1976, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which forbids federal funding for abortion, except in the case of rape, incest, and life endangerment. Most states have also banned state Medicaid funding for abortion. The Hyde Amendment creates an enormous barrier for low-income women to access timely abortion services.

Since passage of Hyde, between 18%-35% of Medicaid-eligible women who would have had abortions if funding had been available, instead carried their pregnancies to term. Currently, about 6 million women of reproductive age (15-44) depend on Medicaid for their health care. On average, the cost of a first-trimester abortion is about \$468, and about 88% of abortions take place within the first-trimester. The cost of an abortion increases significantly after the first-trimester; at 16 weeks, the average cost is \$774, and at 20 weeks is \$1,179. Many low-income women of color struggle to scrape together enough money for an abortion (and additional costs such as travel or child care), which creates significant delays in accessing first-trimester abortions.

Medicaid Coverage of Abortion as of 2005

17 states	- Provide public funding for all or most medically necessary abortions
4 states	- Voluntarily fund abortions for low-income women beyond the Hyde Amendment (Hawaii, Maryland, New York and Washington)
13 states	- Required to fund abortions for low-income women by court order
33 states	- Provide public funding for abortion in the limited cases of life endangerment, incest or rape, although a few of these states have exceptions for fetal anomalies or severe health problems.

Impact on Asian Pacific Islander Women

- The Hyde Amendment creates an additional obstacle to accessing timely abortion services for many low-income API women, especially immigrant Asian women. Consider these alarming facts:
 - 10.7% of all Asians and Pacific Islanders live below the poverty level, compared with 7.8% of whites. Moreover, 67% of Laotians, 66% of Hmong and 47% of Cambodians in the U.S. live in poverty.
 - Federal law created a 5-year bar on Medicaid benefits for immigrants entering the country after August 1996. States may offer Medicaid coverage for reproductive health care services to post-



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enactment immigrants but they must do so at their own cost. Currently, less than half of states opt to use their own funds to provide any coverage during the waiting period. In 2001, more than 60% of poor immigrant women of reproductive age were uninsured.

- Because of these restrictive federal laws, many API and immigrant Asian women are denied abortion coverage, even in states in which Medicaid pays for abortion, creating a significant financial barrier to accessing abortion services.

What You Can Do!

- **LEARN ABOUT THE HYDE AMENDMENT:** National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (www.latinainstitute.org), National Network of Abortion Funds (www.hyde30years.nnaf.org), National Organization for Women (<http://www.now.org/>), Advocates for Youth (<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youth/index.htm>), African American Women Evolving (<http://www.aaweonline.org/>)
- **HOLD EDUCATION FORUMS:** Have your chapter partner with a local abortion fund to educate your community about the impact of the Hyde Amendment on API women and women of color. Find a fund in your area at: www.hyde30years.nnaf.org and clicking on the “Participating Organizations” button.
- **ENGAGE IN ADVOCACY:** Write letters, emails, faxes, and make calls to urge your Members of Congress to repeal the Hyde Amendment and support access to reproductive health services for all women.
- **USE THE MEDIA:** Submit stories, opinion-editorials, articles or other materials about the Hyde Amendment, the 30 year anniversary and the campaign to your local newspapers.

References

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