



## **national asian pacific american women's forum**

**napawf**

6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 506

Takoma Park, MD 20912

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[www.napawf.org](http://www.napawf.org)

### **Hyde Amendment – 30 Years is Enough!**

**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 one-third of all abortions. Only three years later, however, in 1976, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which created an enormous barrier for low-income women to access timely abortion services. The Hyde Amendment forbids federal funding for abortion, except in the case of rape, incest, and life endangerment.

More than seven million women of reproductive age (15-44) currently depend on Medicaid for their health care. On average, the cost of a first-trimester abortion is \$468, however the cost increases significantly after the first-trimester; at 16 weeks, the average cost is \$774, and at 20 weeks, the cost is \$1,179. Since passage of Hyde, the federal government has paid for less than 1% of all abortions. Many poor 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. Low-income women take up to three weeks longer than other women to obtain an abortion because they need time to raise money for the procedure. Moreover, between 18-35% of Medicaid-eligible women reported that they would have had an abortion if funding had been available, but instead carried their pregnancies to term.

#### *State Medicaid Coverage of Abortions as of 2007*

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 also have exceptions for fetal anomalies or severe health problems

### **Impact on Asian Pacific Islander Women**

Access to abortion is critically important for Asian and Pacific Islander (API) women. The Hyde Amendment creates an additional obstacle to accessing timely abortion services for many low-income API women, especially immigrant women. Consider these alarming facts:



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- 11.1% of all Asians and Pacific Islanders live below the poverty level, compared with 8.3% of non-Hispanic 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 waiting period on accessing Medicaid benefits for immigrants entering the country after August 1996. States may offer Medicaid coverage for reproductive health care services to post-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](http://www.latinainstitute.org)), National Network of Abortion Funds ([www.hyde30years.nnaf.org](http://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](http://www.hyde30years.nnaf.org) and clicking on the "Participating Organizations" button.
- **SIGN THE PETITION TO REPEAL HYDE:** Send a strong message to Congress to repeal the Hyde Amendment. <http://www.hyde30years.nnaf.org/petition.html>
- **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.



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