

President, Board of Supervisors
District 3



City and County of San Francisco

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PRESS RELEASE

Board President David Chiu Introduces Resolution Opposing Sex-Selective Abortion Bans

San Francisco partners with the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum to call on cities, states and the federal government to reject discriminatory measures perpetuated by anti-choice lawmakers

SAN FRANCISCO — San Francisco Board of Supervisors President David Chiu today introduced a resolution opposing “sex-selective abortion bans” and the racial discrimination they inflict on women of color, particularly on Asian American women. The resolution, co-sponsored by Supervisors Jane Kim, Katy Tang, London Breed, and Malia Cohen, will be the first legislative action nationwide to proactively oppose this type of abortion ban, which was the second most-proposed state restriction on abortion last year. Twenty-one states and the United States Congress have proposed such bans, and eight states have enacted them.

Since 2009, over 60 bills have been introduced at federal and state levels that would ban abortions performed on the basis of race or sex. In states that have already instituted such bans, doctors or nurses that suspect a patient is seeking a race- or sex-selective abortion are required to report that patient to authorities.

Women's rights organizations such as the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), NARAL California, and the ACLU have argued that the rationale for such bans is rooted in the false notion that sex-selection in favor of choosing boys is being exercised by Asian American families, thus perpetuating negative stereotypes about Asian American women and the broader Asian American community, as well as general anti-immigrant sentiment. Some sex-selective bans also include a ‘race-selective’ ban, that would ban abortions performed on the basis of race, and are based on suggestions that African American women are not capable of responsible reproductive health decisions.

“The rhetoric used by legislators advocating these measures is perpetuating racial stereotypes, is deeply offensive and can lead to the denial of health care services to women,” said Supervisor David Chiu, “No woman should ever be scrutinized by her doctor based on her racial or ethnic background, but this is exactly what a sex-selective abortion ban encourages.”

This past May, University of Chicago Law School researchers — in partnership with NAPAWF and Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health (ANSIRH) — released a [groundbreaking report](#) that debunks the myths used to promote these laws.

“The National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum is representing thousands of Asian American women in the fight against anti-abortion legislation that promotes stigma and discrimination aimed at our community,” said Miriam Yeung, NAPAWF executive director. “The real goal of this legislation is banning all abortions. Asia policies interfere with the doctor-patient relationship, undermining health care and increasing hn Americans are being used for the conservative agenda and turned into collateral damage.” Yeung notes that such policies interfere with the doctor-patient relationship, undermining health care and increasing health disparities.

"As an Asian American, a mother of 2 daughters, and a physician, I feel that sex-selective abortion bans will result in racial discrimination and racial profiling when it comes to provision of reproductive health care services," said Dr. Sophia Yen, Adolescent Medicine Specialist and Pediatrician. These laws just place another unnecessary burden on those who provide abortion and the women who seek those services. Sex-selective abortion bans do nothing to address the root cause of sexism.”

A broad group of women’s rights, health, and civil rights organizations endorse the resolution: ACCESS, ACLU of California, Backline, Center on Reproductive Rights and Justice, Ibis, Law Students for Reproductive Justice, Law Students for Reproductive Justice - UC Davis, NARAL California, Physicians for Reproductive Health, Trust Women - Silver Ribbon Campaign, Alliance of South Asians Taking Action (ASATA), Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center, Asian American Women Artists Association, Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, Asian Law Caucus, Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Asian Women’s Shelter, Chinese for Affirmative Action, Community Health for Asian Americans, Forward Together, Maitri and Narika.

Link to NAPAWF report: <http://bit.ly/NAPAWFstudy>

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