MedicalXpress

US porn makers slam HIV claims, vow to end moratorium

September 11 2013, by Michael Thurston

US porn filmmakers who have suspended production after a number of actors reportedly tested HIV-positive accused critics Tuesday of "political posturing" and making unfounded claims.

Diane Duke, head of the Free Speech Coalition, a trade association for the adult entertainment industry, cast doubt on reports a fourth actor had tested positive for the virus behind AIDS.

She lashed out at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), which has spearheaded a campaign to make condom use obligatory on porn film shoots, and has in the past represented actors who tested positive.

"There is no evidence of a fourth case," Duke told AFP, referring to reports over the weekend after a new US-wide moratorium was declared last Friday, following a week-long suspension in August.

"This announcement seems to be political posturing by AHF. Last month they announced a syphilis outbreak in the adult film industry when in reality not one performer had syphilis," she added.

The industry first suspended filming last month after an actress called Cameron Bay tested HIV-positive. A second performer linked to Bay, Rod Daily, announced on Twitter he too had tested positive.

The suspension was lifted after a week, but it was reinstated Friday when a third case was reported to the Free Speech Coalition by an industry-

affiliated doctor, according to The Los Angeles Times.

"The moratorium is still in place and is nationwide," said Duke, adding that the group's medical advisory council was discussing what steps were required to lift the suspension.

AHF boss Michael Weinstein was quoted by the newspaper as saying of the fourth case: "We were approached by a male performer who told us he had tested positive," but giving no further details.

An AHF spokesman told AFP Tuesday that there are only two FSC-confirmed cases: Bay and the woman whose infection triggered the re-imposition of the moratorium on Friday. The other identified victim, Daily, was only so far by his own Twitter admission.

"The fourth case is a male who met with someone from AHF last week seeking general advice, and then asked for confidentiality," said the spokesman Ged Kenslea.

He added that, if condom bans in theory in place under California and Los Angeles County law were properly enforced, "there would be no need for moratoriums.

"To be clear: testing is NOT prevention-Testing merely tells you if you have something or not. Condoms are a barrier protection that prevents transmission of a number of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV," he said.

"How many more HIV infections must it take for the industry to act to comply with the law and protect its performers?"

The latest HIV cases and filming suspensions are not the first in the US porn industry, based in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles.

In 2004 up to 14 actors tested HIV positive, forcing several film firms to close, while in 2010 a 24-year-old porn actor, Derrick Burts, triggered a moratorium and outed himself in an emotional LA press conference.

For the filmmakers, Free Speech Coalition head Duke said Tuesday that AHF was wrong and its activism in the adult film industry was misguided: "There is much good to be done in prevention and treatment of HIV. And there are a number of good HIV organizations who accomplish amazing things.

"Unfortunately the millions AHF has squandered trying to regulate an industry that has not had an on set transmission of HIV in over nine years is forever wasted," she said.

The AHF spokesman, asked about Duke's accusation of "political posturing," said simply: "Her comment is what it is."

The porn industry, both loved and hated, does massive business, estimated to be worth over $13 billion a year in the United States alone.

© 2013 AFP

Citation: US porn makers slam HIV claims, vow to end moratorium (2013, September 11) retrieved 18 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-09-porn-makers-slam-hiv-vow.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.