

California considers condoms for porn actors

February 18 2016, by John Rogers

Condoms could be coming to porn studios across California if the state agency in charge of enforcing workplace safety adopts proposed new regulations aimed at protecting actors who make adult films.

The state Division of Occupational Safety and Health was scheduled to vote on the regulations following a hearing Thursday in Oakland.

Porn industry officials say the proposed restrictions go too far and could result in [actors](#) having to wear not only condoms but also safety goggles and dental dams—a rectangular piece of latex—when engaging in some acts like oral sex.

"That's pure fantasy on their part," responds Michael Weinstein, head of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, who has pushed Cal/OSHA for years to adopt workplace safety regulations aimed specifically at the porn industry.

Porn executives say their own requirement that actors be tested every 14 days for [sexually transmitted diseases](#) provides adequate protection.

They add that tougher Cal/OSHA rules could drive their multibillion-dollar business, much of which is based in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley, out of the state.

"These are unworkable regulations based in fear and stigma, not science or public health," said Eric Paul Leue, executive director of the industry trade organization the Free Speech Coalition.

He added that more than 100 actors plan to speak out against the proposed regulations.

The AIDS Healthcare Foundation is bringing a handful of former actors to the hearing who say they were infected with HIV while working in the business.

Under the 21-page proposal the agency is considering, so-called engineering controls, "such as condoms" must be used by actors engaging in sex to reduce the risk of being infected.

Producers would also be required to pay for medical visits, treatments and other health-care costs for their performers.

Condoms are already required for films made in Los Angeles County, thanks to an AIDS Healthcare Foundation-sponsored ordinance that voters adopted in 2012.

Weinstein has complained that filmmakers, who sometimes work out of houses they rent for just a day are two, sometimes ignore that law.

Cal/OSHA could enforce its regulations with, among other things, the kind of workplace visits it requires of other industries.

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Citation: California considers condoms for porn actors (2016, February 18) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-02-california-condoms-porn-actors.html>

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