

CALIFORNIA: L.A. Moves to Block Vote to Mandate Condoms in Porn

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The Los Angeles City Attorney's office on Thursday filed a lawsuit to block a ballot measure that would let voters decide whether the city should require condom use by adult-film actors in productions seeking a filming permit. The city's San Fernando Valley is the center of the US porn industry.

AIDS Healthcare Foundation has collected more than 71,000 unverified voter signatures in support of the measure. These are now undergoing confirmation by city officials, said Michael Weinstein, AHF's president. The initiative needs just 41,183 verified signatures to get on the ballot.

In a filing in Los Angeles Superior Court, city attorneys argued the measure is unnecessary and will waste taxpayer money. State workplace safety laws already address the need for protective barriers where employees face the risk of exposure to pathogens such as HIV and other STDs, they said. The city is urging the court not to wait until after the election to invalidate the measure, which attorneys deemed "patently illegal," saying that waiting could "undermine the public trust." "I think it's extraordinary to attempt to thwart the will of 71,000 voters who under the laws of the city of Los Angeles wish to see this measure put before the voters," Weinstein said, adding that the measure should not cost the city any more money, since the June 2012 election is being held anyway.

Diane Duke, executive director of the porn industry trade group Free Speech Coalition, praised the city's decision and said the initiative wastes AHF donor resources.

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