

## Condom Bill 1334 Vetoed by California Governor Schwarzenegger

In October 2007, the governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, decided to veto Bill 1334, otherwise aptly referred to as the Condom Bill. This bill, spearheaded by California State Assemblyman Sandre Swanson and sponsored by various California-based organizations, including AIDS Project Los Angeles and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), would have allowed nonprofit agencies to distribute 'sexual barrier protection devices,' including dental dams and condoms, amongst the 162,000 California prison inmates. The intention of this bill was to help prevent the increasing problem of inmates spreading sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV, to each other, and, ultimately, their sexual partners outside of prison upon release.

The president of AHF, Michael Weinstein, obviously disappointed with the outcome urged that "it is the responsibility and obligation of state government to ensure effective public health measures are employed wherever they can break the chain of infection."

Governor Schwarzenegger does not disagree; however, his major concern with Bill 1334 was its direct conflict with state laws that make it illegal for prisoners to have sex with each other. Schwarzenegger issued a statement after the veto stating that "condom distribution in prisons is not an unreasonable public policy, and it is consistent with the need to improve our prison health care system and overall public health." Because of this, he has allowed the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to begin work on a pilot program of condom distribution that would be initiated in one California state prison. While some county jails, namely those in Los Angeles and San Francisco, have made it a practice to distribute condoms to inmates, Schwarzenegger advised directors of CDCR to specify one state prison where nonprofit health organizations could dispense condoms and other sexual barrier protection devices.

As is the case with most legislative matters, no single party is completely satisfied with the outcome. Those who both sponsored and supported the bill feel it is a step, albeit a small one, in the right direction. After the introduction of the pilot program, Assemblyman Swanson felt that it "is an extremely positive move forward. The project is going to demonstrate that we can reduce the spread of these sexually transmitted diseases." On the other hand, those who are viewing the decision from another perspective feel that it condones unlawful acts. Lynne Fishel, a spokesperson for the California Family Council, a nonprofit organization, says, "He (Schwarzenegger) acknowledges that it's illegal, but he wants to put a pilot project in one prison? I don't understand the logic." Even prison guards have chimed in on the case citing security issues with the distribution of condoms. Their concern is that prisoners will use condoms to hide and transport drugs.

AIDS Project Los Angeles has issued studies that demonstrate distributed condoms amongst prison inmates are highly effective in preventing sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Strong advocates of Bill 1334, they, along with many others vow to bring the bill back year after year until non-profit health agencies can freely distribute condoms throughout every California prison.

For more information visit: <http://www.condomman.com/articles/condom-use/condom-bill-1334-vetoed-by-california-governor-schwarzenegger/>

### About the Author

CondomMan.com is a leading online retailer of condoms, selling name brand [wholesale condoms](#) like Durex, Trojan condoms, Lifestyles and Crown condoms for the best prices online. Shop at Condom Man's Online [Condom Store](#). Learn how to put on a condom, how to choose the right condom for you, and more.

Source: <http://www.spivo.com/articles>