

PRESS RELEASE

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ASIAN AMERICAN LEADERS URGE GOVERNOR TO SIGN MARRIAGE EQUALITY BILL RALLIES TO BE ORGANIZED THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2007—Asian American community leaders are urging Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to sign AB 43, legislation that would grant same-sex couples the ability to marry. California stands poised to be the first state to enact marriage equality through legislative action.

Public officials and community leaders believe Governor Schwarzenegger may not veto AB 43, as it was originally anticipated. The bill was passed by the State Assembly and Senate, and requires the Governor to make his decision by October 14. In 2005, the Governor vetoed the bill immediately. This time, he has yet to take action.

“The California Legislature has given Governor Schwarzenegger a second opportunity to be a hero by signing AB 43 to ensure that all California families are able to enjoy the rights and obligations of civil marriage,” says Karin Wang, Vice President-Programs at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center. “We urge him not to do a veto sequel on the marriage bill, but to instead play the part of a civil rights hero.”

“Each of us deserves the same opportunities to realize our hopes and dreams,” says Vivian Huang, Director of Legislative Advocacy at Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality (AACRE). “By granting gay and lesbian families the freedom to marry, the Governor has the power to provide these families with the same opportunities as everyone else.” According to UCLA’s Williams Institute, there are approximately 9,000 gay and lesbian families in California’s Asian American communities that would stand to benefit from marriage equality.

Supporters of the freedom to marry are taking to the streets throughout California during the evening of **Tuesday, September 18**, to urge the Governor to sign AB 43. Members of API Equality will be present at the following demonstrations in Los Angeles and San Francisco to show their support and to be available for interviews with the media:

Los Angeles:

Supporters will meet at 7:00 p.m. at the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center (McDonald/Wright Building, 1625 N. Schrader Blvd., Los Angeles, 90028) and march to Governor Schwarzenegger’s star on the Walk of Fame

San Francisco:

Supporters will meet at 5:30 p.m. at the San Francisco LGBT Community Center (1800 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94103) for a press conference with Assemblymember Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, and then march to the Castro.

API Equality is committed to working in our Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities for equal marriage rights and fair treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) families through community organizing, media outreach, public education, and legal and legislative advocacy.

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