



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN INTRODUCES RESOLUTION AGAINST SEX-SELECTIVE ABORTION BANS

Bans proposed nationwide open new front in war against women's reproductive rights by perpetuating Asian American stereotypes

CITY HALL – Council Member Margaret Chin joined her Council colleagues today to introduce a resolution taking a stand against sex-selective abortion bans, which perpetuate racial stereotypes and undermine access to reproductive healthcare.

“In their myopic pursuit of an anti-choice agenda, lawmakers are jeopardizing the basic healthcare needs of Asian-American women. And yet, despite the dangerous consequences, they are having some legislative success,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “With New York City home to one of the largest Asian-American populations in the country, we demand that our state and federal colleagues work to ensure our communities have greater access to healthcare — not more restrictions. By working together with advocates to introduce this new resolution, we are urging our City to take a stand against these offensive bans.”

Sex-selective bans restrict abortions made on the basis of sex and subject doctors who perform such procedures to the threat of jail time, fines, or lawsuits.

More than just an attack on reproductive health and family planning services, these bans promote ugly stereotypes about immigrant communities – principally, that Asian Americans do not value the lives of girls.

Many in the Asian-American community already face heightened linguistic and economic barriers to accessing care, and laws like these widen the gap. In New York City, 49 percent of Asian-American adults have limited English proficiency; 20 percent of all Asian-Americans in the City are uninsured.

Sex-selective bans also damage the doctor-patient relationship by opening private medical decisions to scrutiny by both healthcare providers and law enforcement.

In 2013 and 2014, sex-selective bans were the second most proposed type of abortion restriction in the U.S. Even New York State is not immune — this year, one such law was introduced in the Assembly.

“The U.S. is home to 42.1 million immigrants in search of refuge, equal opportunity, human rights protections and freedoms that have been denied in other parts of the world. The City of New York is a reflection of the global diversity that has grown exponentially over the past several years and contributes to our unique identity and culture. Access to healthcare is pivotal to the wellbeing of our community. We cannot and should not deny access to healthcare based on one’s race, culture, religious beliefs, or gender. Any restrictions imposed on reproductive healthcare would have an adverse impact on women, particularly women of color, and sets a dangerous precedent that would undermine the lifesaving work of our health professionals and jeopardize millions of lives. Today, we are urging the United States Congress and the State of New York to support a woman’s right to choose and to oppose sex-selective abortion bans. We cannot allow any bans that would undermine the ability of a woman to make the best choice for her body amongst her family and health practitioner,” said **Council Member Laurie A. Cumbo, chair of the Council’s Committee on Women’s Issues.**

“As one of New York City leading sexual and reproductive health care providers, Planned Parenthood of New York City (PPNYC) knows how important it is that women trust their health care providers to keep their personal information confidential and have open and honest communication about their health care needs,” said **Joan Malin, President and CEO of PPNYC.** “Bans on sex-selective abortions do nothing more than perpetuate racial stereotypes and could lead to health care providers singling out patients, questioning patients’ decisions and possibly denying patients’ access to care. PPNYC applauds Council Member Chin for introducing a resolution that will put New York City on the record as opposing these racially driven and damaging bans.”

“We applaud Council Member Margaret Chin for her leadership in stopping sex-selective abortion bans in their tracks. New York City is home to the largest Asian American population in the United States, which makes taking a decisive stance against these bans that much more urgent,” said **Miriam Yeung, Executive Director of the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF).** “These senseless laws are bad for women’s health and add insult to injury by promoting false stereotypes that Asian American women and families don’t value girls. Sex-selective abortion bans undermine trust between doctors and their patients and intensify the barriers Asian American women already face in accessing reproductive health care. We commend New York for joining the growing list of cities taking proactive steps in support of women’s reproductive health and rights.”

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