



Southeast Asia Resource Action Center

California Legislation in 2007-2008 and the Impact on Southeast Asian Americans

The following is a list of Assembly bills (AB) and Senate bills (SB) that SEARAC has been monitoring this past legislative year that may affect the Southeast Asian American community in California. Of the twenty seven bills, only seven were signed into law and six were vetoed while the remaining fourteen were held in committee hearings. The bills that were not signed into law have the possibility of being introduced again in future legislative sessions.

SIGNED INTO LAW

- **AB 288** (Price) requires that violators of voter intimidation provisions pay a fine to be used to fund voter education campaigns.
- **AB 394** (Levine) ensures that the State Department of Education enforces the pre existing anti-discrimination and anti-harassment requirements in schools.
- **AB 650** (Lieu) requires employers to inform employees of their potential eligibility for the federal earned income tax credit.
- **AB 763** (Saldana) requires that condo conversion agreements that were negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese or Korean be translated in the language in which the agreement was negotiated.
- **AB 976** (Calderon) prohibits cities and counties from requiring landlords to inquire about a tenant's (or prospective tenant's) immigration or citizenship status.
- **SB 472** (Corbett) calls for standardizing prescription drug labels to consider the needs of Limited English Proficient patients such as access to telephone consultations, etc.
- **SB 777** (Kuehl) would standardize and clarify various nondiscrimination provisions in education.

VETOED

- **AB 8** (Nunez and Perata) proposes to expand public and private health care coverage for California residents. Medical and Healthy Families programs will become eligible for all California children as well as low-income parents. This bill requires employers to prove health insurance to their employees or pay into a state fund from which employees can buy health insurance.
- **AB 122** (Solorio) mandates that candidates running for elected office receive a copy of laws prohibiting voter intimidation and voter fraud.
- **AB 280** (Coto) will establish a State Seal of Biliteracy for high school students who demonstrate proficiency in another language other than English.
- **AB 295** (Lieu) ensures that state data collection aligns with the US Census by collecting data for additional Asian Pacific Islander American ethnic groups, including Hmong, Tongan, Thai, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Indonesian, Taiwanese, and Fijian. (SEARAC supports this bill.)
- **AB 614** (Eng) will improve access to voting for all voters, including the Limited English proficient, by monitoring the compliance of federal and state voting rights laws and evaluating complaints.
- **SB 1** (Cedillo) enacts the California Dream Act that would make immigrant high school students eligible to apply for state financial aid if they have met requirements for attending college with in-state tuition.

HELD IN COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Note: "Held in Committee Hearings" means that proposed bills are not heard in the committee that the bill has been assigned to. Terms that are used to refer to the bill when this action is taken are: "held", "suspended", or "canceled on the request of the author". The reasons why these bills are held, suspended or canceled are not always known and are the decision of the committee or the author of the bill. Because the bill does not make it through the committee, legislators may not vote on it and therefore, the governor does not have the opportunity to sign or veto the bill.

- **AB 1** (Laird) expands Medi-cal and Healthy Families program eligibility by creating a Healthy Families Buy-In Program for children whose household income exceeds 300% of the federal poverty level.
- **AB 22** (Lieber) allows newborn children to be included when determining CalWORKS maximum aid, based on the number of needy persons in the same family.
- **AB 512** (Lieber) requires that residential loans that were negotiated in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese or Korean be translated into the language in which the agreement was negotiated.
- **AB 515** (Lieber) will require the Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board to prioritize protection in the workplace by establishing permissible exposure limits of harmful substances that may cause cancer or reproductive or developmental toxicity.
- **AB 590** (Solorio) will establish a pilot program in certain school districts to encourage the involvement of Limited English Proficient parents.
- **AB 615** (Torrico) works to ensure that emergency preparedness materials and planning include the Limited English Proficient communities.
- **AB 891** (De La Torre) will ensure that telecommunication service providers provide in-language material to the Limited English Proficient consumers so that informed choices can be made before signing a contract.
- **AB 1060** (Laird) changes the re-determination requirements of CalWORKS and Food Stamps from quarterly reporting to semi-annual reporting.
- **AB 1726** (Judiciary Committee) will require a court interpreter to be provided in civil courts which oversees cases related to child custody, child support, housing, and consumer protections.
- **SB 26** (Simitian) requires state data collection of multi-racial categories.
- **SB 32** (Steinberg) is identical to AB 1 (Laird)
- **SB 160** (Cedillo) enacts the California Dream Act that would make immigrant high school students eligible to apply for state financial aid if they have met requirements for attending college with in-state tuition.
- **SB 305** (Ducheny) will allow English language learner students to take standards-based achievements tests in their primary language which will better demonstrate their academic performance.
- **SB 840** (Kuehl) creates a state run health insurance program for all California residents called the California Universal Healthcare system through combining existing programs like Medi-Cal and Healthy Families. This bill will be funded through state income and payroll taxes.

Note: This document serves as a resource; SEARAC does not hold any positions on these bills unless otherwise indicated.