The National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD) is a membership organization representing health department STD directors, their support staff, and community-based partners across 50 states, seven large cities, and eight U.S. territories, including California, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. NCSD is a partnership of public health professionals dedicated to promoting sexual health through the prevention of STDs. NCSD provides dynamic leadership that strengthens STD programs by advocating for effective policies, strategies, and sufficient resources by increasing awareness of the medical and social impacts of STDs.

After passing a Policy Statement on Worker Health and Safety in the Adult Film Industry in 2010, NCSD continues to be concerned about insufficient STD and HIV prevention efforts within the adult film industry. This industry creates between 4,000-11,000 films each year with gross revenue of $9-13 billion annually. Yet evidence suggests that the industry fails to take the necessary steps to ensure its thousands of workers are protected from acquiring STDs, including HIV. Data from 2004 through 2008 showed that 18 to 26 percent of performers were diagnosed with at least one gonorrhea or chlamydia infection each year, 72 percent of those being among women. Nearly 25 percent of all STD cases among women were reinfections within 1 year, compared with 15 percent of women seen in family planning and STD clinics. A 2010 study of adult film actors in Los Angeles County found that 28 percent of actors tested positive for gonorrhea and/or chlamydia. These statistics are too stark to ignore.

Everyone deserves a safe workplace. Because of the unique nature of the adult film industry, we believe a special effort is needed to keep its actors healthy. To reduce the epidemic of STDs in the adult film industry, NCSD supports policy efforts that require the following:

1. Performers undergo regular, confidential STD and HIV testing at employer expense: Regular testing helps workers know their STD and HIV statuses, get tested, and prevent further STD/HIV transmission to other performers. Requiring employers to pay for those tests eliminates the cost barrier associated with STD and HIV testing and treatment and increases testing compliance.

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2. *Actors use condoms in adult film production:* Testing alone is not enough to prevent the spread of HIV and other STDs among adult film workers. Conducting enough testing to ensure that all performers are STD and HIV free is almost impossible given the frequency of sex as part of adult film work. Similarly, the incubation time for HIV and other STDs can make detecting infections difficult soon after exposure. Performers should also wear condoms to add another safeguard and prevent transmission of all STDs, including HIV.

3. *Workers receive health training about condom use for the prevention of HIV and other STDs:* When adult film workers know how to properly use condoms, the benefits of regular testing for HIV and other STDs and where and how to obtain treatment, they have the tools needed to make informed decisions about their personal health. Moreover, they possess the tools to prevent potential transmission.

4. *Health Departments are Partners in Prevention:* The appropriate health jurisdiction can only ensure that all adult film makers are indeed adhering to code and promoting activities that decrease all STDs, including HIV, among actors if they are seen as partners. Collaboration is essential between adult film producers and health departments in jurisdictions where adult films are produced. Additionally, health departments in jurisdictions where adult film production is significant need dedicated resources and other supports to carry out regular investigation and oversight.

By requiring the items above, we can greatly reduce HIV and other STDs in the adult film industry and ensure a healthy work environment for its performers.

Best regards,

William A. Smith  
Executive Director  
National Coalition of STD Directors