



The **Opportunity** Agenda

Building the National Will to Expand Opportunity in America

NO ON PROP 4!

Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice and California Latinas for Reproductive Justice Unite to Fight an Anti-Abortion Voter Initiative in California

In May of 2008, Proposition 4, or the Abortion Waiting Period and Parental Notification Initiative, qualified for the California ballot. If passed, the initiative would have amended the state constitution to require a 48-hour waiting period and parental notification before a minor could get an abortion. This was the third time anti-abortion forces had placed a parental notification measure before the state's voters. California Latinas for Reproductive Justice (CLRJ) and Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice (ACRJ) had participated in the mainstream pro-choice coalition to defeat the two previous initiatives, but this time, they decided to reach out to other reproductive justice organizations in the state in order to use the "No" campaign to "build the capacity to move a proactive agenda in California that achieves reproductive justice for all communities." The result was the formation of the Reproductive Justice Alliance.

Message development was a critical first task, and all the Alliance messages were based on the values of family and community and emphasized what youth *really* needed to be safe and healthy:

- "Protect Our Daughters and Sisters!"
- "Protect our youth, families & communities!"
- "Youth need health care, NOT laws that create barriers to health care; Youth need sexual health education, NOT laws that take money from schools and services; Youth who are pregnant need support, NOT unrealistic laws that make it harder for youth to get help from adults."
- "Protect our Youth. Respect our Families. Support Our Communities."

Multilingual flyers were distributed both by hand and electronically to thousands of voters.

ACRJ and CLRJ trained and activated new leaders from among the participants in their community organizing projects. They held youth conferences, created activist tool-kits, reached out to ethnic media, and conducted get-out-the-vote phone-banking and canvassing. They greatly increased their reach by partnering with the "No on Six" campaign, an alliance of labor and social justice organizations opposing a proposition to allow the government to try youth as young as 14 as adults.

ACRJ and CLRJ's efforts helped defeat Prop 4 by a 52-48% margin, and young Latino voters, CLRJ's target audience, voted no by a 60-40% margin. Today, the California's RJ movement is in a stronger position to influence public policy going forward.