



## CEQA: A GOOD LAW IN NEED OF REFORM.

### ***Protestors Use CEQA in Attempt to Stop South San Francisco Planned Parenthood Women's Clinic – And They Use Their Own Protests As the CEQA Complaint!***

In 2013 Planned Parenthood received approval from the South San Francisco City Council to renovate an existing building to house a new health clinic in South San Francisco to meet the medical needs of women in the area, including STD testing, breast cancer screening and other reproductive care.

A group opposed to abortion services filed a lawsuit a few months later alleging that the clinic was not fully vetted under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), even though the plan was to rehabilitate an existing building that was currently vacant. They specifically cited noise and traffic problems that the anti-abortion group's *own* protests would cause, saying Planned Parenthood failed to account for that noise in their environmental review.

The anti-abortion group was able to use CEQA, an environmental protection law, to halt the clinic project based on the argument that the demonstrations this same group planned to do might cause traffic and noise.

That lawsuit was filed in 2013 and a judge tentatively ruled that there were ZERO environmental impacts from protesting that triggered CEQA review. Thus, the judge ruled in favor of Planned Parenthood in July of last year, but the project continues to be held up because the final ruling is pending.

Planned Parenthood was still forced to spend time and money to defend themselves in a legal battle for a year, and likely longer if the group appeals, over a lawsuit that had nothing to do with the environment. The cost of litigation could have been used to upgrade and outfit the building to make it into a much-needed clinic.

Unfortunately the clinic still has not been built almost a year after the ruling and two years after its approval, leaving many low income women without access to medical services they desperately need.

Once the final ruling is made the anti-abortion group will likely appeal, which will further delay this needed women's clinic.

#### **COST OF CEQA MISUSE:**

- Frivolous CEQA lawsuit delays a women's health clinic needed for low income women.
- CEQA lawsuit was based on the petitioners own demonstrations.
- Nearly two years after approval, the clinic is still not open.

#### **About this series:**

*The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is an important environmental law. However, today's CEQA is too often misused to stop or delay projects that comply with all applicable environmental laws and standards. "CEQA: A Good Law In Need of Reform" will call attention to the many examples of CEQA misuses, and the consequences on vital projects, our environment and our economy. Visit [www.CEQAWorkingGroup.com](http://www.CEQAWorkingGroup.com) for more case studies or information about efforts to modernize CEQA.*



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