

California counties taking harder look at tattoo parlors

By Ed Fletcher, Sacramento Bee

As county officials work to implement state legislation requiring tattoo and piercing shops to register and pass a battery of tests, some area practitioners question the need for the new regulations and ask whether the government will crack down on underground artists.

AB300 created California inspection and registration protocols for tattoo and piercing shops, as well as the artists, but left it to the counties to do the legwork. The bill, authored by Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, D-San Francisco, is aimed at protecting the public from exposure to hepatitis C and other blood-borne pathogens. It took effect in July.

Ma said she was shocked six years ago to learn there were no state rules on the operation of tattoo parlors.

“I wanted to do something about this to ensure diseases would not be shared through needles,” Ma said.

With the backing of industry trade groups, her legislation was passed in 2011.

The legislation also allows counties to assess shops and practitioners to fund annual inspections.

Placer County took action Tuesday, adopting a fee schedule under which Placer County tattoo and piercing practitioners must pay \$80 a year. Other fees were assigned for permanent facilities, temporary events and in various other categories.

Read the whole story