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Press Release

South Bay high school student will lead youth delegation to Sacramento Wednesday.

Denis Hiller will represent the National Youth Rights Association with California officials to protest the pending smoking age bill.

Sacramento, Calif., June 24, 2002:

Denis Hiller, a 17 year old junior South Bay high school student from Mountain View, Calif., has organized and is leading a youth delegation to the California capitol this Wednesday to testify before the legislature regarding a bill that will raise the smoking age to 21. Explaining his decision to fight this bill Hiller said, "Being a non-smoking young person, I see at this bill as an attack on our rights." Hiller will represent the National Youth Rights Association (NYRA), the largest youth rights movement in the United States. "Our trip to the state capitol will empower youth in Silicon Valley [Santa Clara County] and around the country, it is an honor to represent my peers," Hiller said.

This bill has received a plethora of media attention and as the bill comes closer to a vote, it becomes essential for people to speak up to prevent this bill from becoming law. Assemblyman Paul Koretz, a Los Angeles Democrat sponsoring the bill said, "This will make California the strictest state in the nation when it comes to letting young people smoke," in an MSNBC article. Most U.S. states allow tobacco purchases at 18, except Utah, Alaska and Alabama at 19. Koretz also stated this bill is "the next step in reducing teen smoking." It is a highly probable that if this bill passes in California, other bills will take place around the country; this is the best time to fight this.

Hiller attends Middle College, an alternative high school program under Los Altos High. Middle College is an accelerated program where students take mostly college classes at a local college where the students can explore themselves in a variety of classes outside of a traditional high school environment. Hiller is son to Anatoly and Inna Hiller of Mountain View, Calif. Hiller has only recently become interested in politics because of his newfound interest in youth rights with NYRA.

Hiller and NYRA representatives are available for interviews immediately.

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