



Planned Parenthood Faces Funding Cuts in Texas and Utah

Planned Parenthood, whose 327,653 abortions performed from October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 made it the nation's largest abortion provider, is facing state funding cuts in both Texas and Utah. As a result, affiliates of the abortion giant have gone to court, with Planned Parenthood of Utah filing notice on December 28 with the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver that it plans to appeal a federal judge's ruling that allowed Governor Gary Herbert to cut off its funding.



On December 22, U.S. District Court Judge Clark Waddoups upheld Herbert's decision made last August ordering state agencies to stop acting as a conduit for federal grants that the state had applied for and then awarded contracts to Planned Parenthood to provide the programs. Herbert's order blocked about \$275,000 from Planned Parenthood's sexual education programs. The *Salt Lake Tribune* reported on August 17 that the governor's decision was made in response to a video featuring an official with Planned Parenthood's national organization discussing providing fetal tissue to scientific researchers and how much the group charges for the service.

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"We now have a video where they're selling fetus body parts for money and it's an outrage and the people of Utah are outraged. I'm outraged. So for coloring outside the lines, Planned Parenthood forfeits some of their benefits," the *Tribune* quoted Herbert as saying. In return, Planned Parenthood of Utah sued the governor on September 28, but Waddoups' ruling rejects that suit.

Utah is not the only state to deny funding to Planned Parenthood. In one of the other states doing so, an official with the Texas Department of State Health Services informed the Houston-based Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast on December 21 that they are cutting off funding to the affiliate for an HIV prevention program. The funding amounts to about \$600,000.

"There will be no further renewals of this contract," an agency official wrote in the notice to Planned Parenthood.

LifeNews.com quoted a department spokesman who said that his agency is "working with local health departments in the area to continue to provide [HIV prevention] services."

A report in the *Texas Tribune* stated that the cancelled contract is funded through the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention but managed by the state. A spokeswoman for the CDC said she was unaware of the state's notice and did not provide a comment to the newspaper.

This was not the only time Texas state officials have cut off funding for Planned Parenthood. As [The New American reported on October 27](#), in response to the same videos that had prompted Herbert's decision in Utah, Texas Governor Greg Abbott had cut off all state and local funding to the abortion



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on December 29, 2015

provider. Abbott pulled no punches in condemning Planned Parenthood and its practices in a statement he gave to LifeNews.com, which said, in part:

The gruesome harvesting of baby body parts by Planned Parenthood will not be allowed in Texas and the barbaric practice must be brought to an end. As such, ending the Medicaid participation of Planned Parenthood affiliates in the State of Texas is another step in providing greater access to safe healthcare for women while protecting our most vulnerable — the unborn.

The Office of inspector general of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission also sent a notice of termination to Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast back on October 19 stating that the state was ending the organization's enrollment in the Texas Medicaid program, citing "a series of serious Medicaid program violations." Furthermore, stated the notice, "The State has determined that you and your Planned Parenthood affiliates are no longer capable of performing medical services in a professionally competent, safe, legal, and ethical manner."

The videos released by the Center for Medical Progress that prompted both Utah and Texas to defund Planned Parenthood's activities have also had an impact at the federal level. Though efforts to remove the abortion provider's funding from the \$1.1-trillion spending bill recently passed by both houses of Congress were unsuccessful, the lingering aftereffects of the heinous actions they exposed did remain. As Michael Tennant noted in an [article for *The New American*](#) posted on December 24, a group of senators, led by Rand Paul (R-Ky.), managed to convince the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) office of inspector general (OIG) to investigate the government's oversight of grants for fetal tissue research.

Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHS) Daniel Levinson replied to Paul and 34 other senators on December 4, telling them that his office would "interview HHS and National Institutes of Health (NIH) officials, as the majority of HHS funding for human fetal tissue research is awarded through NIH."

Levinson also stated that his office would be "gathering relevant documentation related to policies and procedures for monitoring fetal tissue research activities." He noted that his goal is to determine how NIH is monitoring both HHS and third-party fetal tissue research and to uncover "any known violations of Federal requirements."

It remains to be seen, however, if Levinson's investigation will actually identify any HHS violations of federal law related to fetal tissue research. As with many other areas where the federal government has delved into areas where it has no constitutional mandate, action taken at the state level is more likely to stop the abuses.

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