



Planned Parenthood Feeling Pinch of De-funding Measures

Planned Parenthood is beginning to feel the results of votes by state legislatures to cut its tax funding, along with cuts in Title X monies at the federal level. In Indiana, a state law cutting Medicaid funding for the abortion provider went into effect in early May. State laws cutting funding to clinics that perform abortions have also been implemented in Kansas and North Carolina, and Wisconsin's pro-life Governor Scott Walker is expected to sign a state budget that includes similar funding cuts.



In Indiana, reported [LifeSite News](#), Planned Parenthood has already lost access to \$1.3 million in family planning funds that [the state] used to pay to the abortion provider. That funding dried up after Governor Mitch Daniels affixed his signature to H.B. 1210, which prohibits family planning groups which also provide abortions such as Planned Parenthood from receiving state funds.

LifeSite News explained that Planned Parenthood is now faced with the choice of splitting its family planning clinics and abortion clinics into two separate legal corporations (with separate bank accounts, boards of directors, etc.), or embracing the new economic realities and downsizing.

Coverage from the major media on the cuts tended to focus on the devastating effects to thousands of low-income patients of Planned Parenthood of Indiana, which the [Associated Press](#) reported were left fending for themselves to pay for birth control, breast exams, Pap tests, and other medical services after supposedly private donations to the group dried up on June 21. While Planned Parenthood with the help of President Obama and the Justice Department is seeking a federal court ruling that would block the cuts, in the meantime officials of the abortion providers Indiana franchise announced they were cutting clinic operating hours and contemplating closing eight facilities.

Family planning dollars fund preventive health services that are critical to low-income and vulnerable women and their families, said Ken Falk of the Indiana ACLU, which is representing Planned Parenthood in its legal efforts to overturn the law. It is unlawful, unnecessary, and cruel to deny these populations health services that they desperately need.

But state officials said that while Medicaid funding to Planned Parenthood did not directly pay for abortions, the dollars ultimately subsidized the groups abortion business by propping up their bottom line, which allowed them to stay afloat as an abortion provider, reported LifeSite News.



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Proponents of the funding cuts pointed out that Planned Parenthood could easily continue providing Medicaid-funded services if it would legally separate its abortion business from its other services effectively preventing its abortion division from benefiting from tax dollars.

Indianas Planned Parenthood operates 28 clinics, reported LifeSite News, including four abortion sites, but may sacrifice eight clinics rather than sever the abortion business from family planning, as a Texas Planned Parenthood had done.

In partnering with Planned Parenthood to fight Indianas defunding law, President Obama has ordered his Medicaid director, Donald Berwick, to deny Indianas changes to its Medicaid program, a move that jeopardizes the states entire \$5.3 billion Medicaid allotment. But state officials are defending the changes, reported LifeSite News, saying every one of Indianas 92 counties will continue to have family planning services for Medicaid recipients. They argue Indiana has every right as a state to determine requirements for qualified Medicaid providers.

Meanwhile, in Minnesota Planned Parenthood finds itself being defunded by cuts to the federal Title X program, which helps to fund the abortion providers family planning services to low-income women in that state.

[Minnesota Public Radio](#) reported that Planned Parenthoods Minnesota branch will close six clinics located in Thief River Falls, Brainerd, Red Wing, Owatonna, Albert Lea, and Fairmont, which, Democratic State Representative Erin Murphy complained, will mean a reduction of family planning services and primary health care for women where access is already limited in rural Minnesota. Especially for young women and those of limited financial means, the loss of these clinics will be real and immediate.

LifeNews.com reported that the cutbacks for Minnesotas largest abortion provider come on the heels of a 5.5 percent cut to Title X funding during the 2011 congressional budget debate. The cut is retroactive to September of last year, and therefore represents an 11 percent cut to Planned Parenthoods current budget.

Minnesota Planned Parenthood CEO Sarah Stoesz insisted that the cuts were driven by ideological attacks on womens health, not by a desire to fix the economy. She added that the abortion provider proudly served these communities for 40 years, and the decision to close our doors is heartbreaking.

While saying she understood that both state and federal governments are struggling to balance their budgets, Stoesz nonetheless insisted that public funding for family planning services is a cost-saving and vital service for tens of thousands of women in our state, especially in rural areas. This was a short-sighted blow to a much-needed program.

On the state level, reported LifeNews.com, Minnesota state legislators hoped to curb the number of abortions further in the state by passing legislation to stop taxpayer funding of abortions and to ban abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, but pro-abortion Gov. Mark Dayton vetoed both bills.

Scott Fischbach, executive director of [Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life](#), told the pro-life news site, We are very disappointed that Gov. Dayton prevented these mainstream measures from becoming law in our state. These are reasonable provisions, not extreme, and have overwhelming support from Minnesotans and legislators.

A similar bill was passed in Minnesota in 1978, but was overturned in 1995 when the state supreme court, ruling in [Doe v. Gomez](#), established an absolute right to abortion in the state Constitution and



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required taxpayers to fund elective abortions for women on public assistance, recalled LifeNews.com. In the nearly 17 years since, according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, state taxpayers have shelled out more than \$17 million to fund 54,802 abortions.



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