



Wisconsin Governor Signs Bills Defunding Planned Parenthood

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker stripped Planned Parenthood, the nation's leading abortion provider, of up to \$8 million in taxpayer funds when he signed two bills into law Thursday.

"We want to make sure as taxpayers, whether it's state funds or federal funds that come through the state of Wisconsin, that they're used in the way that's responsible and reasonable," Walker, a Republican, said at the bill signing, which took place at Life's Connection, a women's health clinic in Waukesha that promotes abortion alternatives. The bills, Walker added, would prevent public money from going to "controversial entities like Planned Parenthood."



One of the bills reduces the Medicaid drug-reimbursement levels for family-planning clinics linked to abortion providers. Under the law, such clinics may only bill Medicaid for their actual acquisition costs plus a dispensing fee, not the larger reimbursements offered to other clinics. Planned Parenthood estimates this will cost them — or, more accurately, save taxpayers — \$4.5 million a year.

According to the [Associated Press](#),

Although the bill doesn't mention Planned Parenthood by name, Democrats and others say it treats the organization differently than other clinics.

"The law is directed just at Planned Parenthood. It's to cut our funding so we can't provide services," said Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin director of government relations Nicole Safar.

"Legal action is certainly on the table. The law singles out Planned Parenthood."

The second bill Walker signed requires the state's Department of Health Services (DHS) to apply for federal Title X funding and to distribute any funding it receives to entities, primarily public clinics and hospitals, that neither provide abortions nor affiliate with entities that do. "This makes it clear that DHS will not send those funds to Planned Parenthood, which is currently the only Wisconsin entity to receive Title X funding," asserted a Walker [press release](#).

Should DHS succeed in obtaining all Title X funding directed to the Badger State, Planned Parenthood would be out \$3.5 million per year. That outcome is not assured, however. "Safar," reported the AP, "said her organization will compete on its own for the Title X funding when the new grant cycle comes up in several years."

Pro-lifers celebrated the signing of the two bills. Heather Weinger, executive director of Wisconsin Right to Life, told [LifeNews.com](#), "These bills ... are essential steps towards steering funds away from



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on February 20, 2016

an organization that has been mired in controversy. [They are] two key bills to curb Planned Parenthood's use of taxpayer dollars in the state of Wisconsin."

Based on the abortion provider's own statistics, it is clear that its use of taxpayer dollars is in serious need of restraint. Wrote LifeNews.com:

Weininger added: "By the admission of Planned Parenthood's President and CEO Teresa Huyck in her deposition for *Planned Parenthood v. Van Hollen*, in 2012 alone Planned Parenthood performed about 4,000 abortions, approximately 60% of all Wisconsin abortions in that year, and the 'vast majority' of the services in the Appleton North and Milwaukee-Jackson centers are abortion."

According to Wisconsin Right to Life, based on the numbers from Planned Parenthood Federation of America's 2013-2014 Annual Report, 19 out of every 20 pregnant women who walk through their doors are sold abortion, and abortion outnumbers adoption referrals by a ratio of 174 to one. Planned Parenthood's claim that abortion makes up "3 percent" of its services is conjured up by parceling out each individual service it does, from a pregnancy test to a pap smear, even if all of these services are done at one visit, with one client, which is a gross manipulation of their numbers.

Walker's actions are the latest in a series of Republican attempts to starve Planned Parenthood of public funds in Wisconsin. In 2011, Walker signed a budget that also [cut funding to Planned Parenthood](#), resulting, the organization claims, in the closure of five clinics in the state. Other states have taken similar measures to defund the abortion provider, though some have been struck down by the courts.

Planned Parenthood, as usual, claims that reducing its taxpayer funding is tantamount to refusing healthcare to women. Tanya Atkinson, executive director of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin, told the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), "The political motivation behind these bills is clear. Opponents of women's health will stop at nothing to prevent Planned Parenthood from providing much needed medical care in the community."

The abortion issue aside, opposition to taxpayer funding of healthcare is not the same thing as opposition to healthcare itself. It is simply an aversion to forcing one person to pay for the care of another; when that payment is funneled through Washington, it may also involve resistance to unconstitutional policy. But even if one believes that wealth transfer for a seemingly noble purpose is acceptable, one would be hard-pressed to justify requiring some people to fund practices they find morally reprehensible, such as abortion.

That, in a nutshell, is what the defund-Planned-Parenthood movement is all about. And if that movement results in fewer abortions — something even pro-"choice" advocates claim to desire — so much the better.

Photo of Gov. Scott Walker: AP Images



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