

Time for Gov. Scott to stop money for Planned Parenthood

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Due to the windfall following the release of videos exposing [Planned Parenthood's](#) egregious behavior, Gov. [Rick Scott](#) continues to make excuses for his lack of action on stopping the flow of state taxpayer money to the organization in Florida. And both he and Politifact has fallen back to the excuse that because no court has yet formally "found" Planned Parenthood "guilty" of the sale of human tissue, there's no reason to act.

Is this leadership? Is this what pro-life Floridians expected of the governor they twice went to the polls to support?

Six other states have completely rejected any funding for Planned Parenthood, including revoking [Medicaid](#) funds. Scott has the legal authority to terminate Medicaid contracts with unqualified providers of services, and he now also has a moral, ethical and fiscal duty to do so given Planned Parenthood's egregious conduct which includes waste, abuse and potential fraud,

Florida's Planned Parenthood affiliates have not been guilty of all the apparent crimes of Planned Parenthood clinics in other states. However, there is a clear commonality of practice among clinics that ties them together, and the potential for abuse anywhere is rampant.

Regardless of whether a court ultimately rules against Planned Parenthood with regards to its willingness to sell baby body parts to tissue procurement companies, the facts and outstanding questions surrounding the group's recorded actions should be noted.

Some defenders of the organization claim "Planned Parenthood said discussions of payments were only about recouping costs, not making a profit." But if this were true, why wouldn't Planned Parenthood act like an innocent party and outline precisely what its actual costs are with regards to transportation, implantation, processing, preservation, quality control and storage. The fact is, most procurement companies have staff inside clinics who handle all aspects of obtaining the baby body parts for sale.

It also begs the question of why the president of Planned Parenthood, Cecile Richards, admitted in her letter to Congress in August that some of her affiliates charge between \$45-55 per specimen, and others charge \$60 per specimen. If it's not payment for actual costs, it's profit. And that violates federal law.

The organization's leaders also have yet to address other important questions the American people deserve to know, including why Planned Parenthood, as Richards also admits, sometimes alters abortion procedures without the woman's consent to procure better fetal body parts, or allows infants to be born alive to then harvest their organs.

Whether or not Planned Parenthood claims to "maintain its policy is to report all suspected instances of sexual abuse," on at least 12 occasions in states across the country, they have failed to report the sexual abuse, including rape, of young girls, and has instead performed abortions on these little girls to then return them back to their abusers. This is in direct violation of state laws requiring an organization like Planned Parenthood to report apparent sexual abuse of minors.

There are examples of Planned Parenthood's continued failure to prioritize the health and safety of women and comply with state and federal law, not to mention its continued pattern and practice of engaging in waste, abuse and potential fraud of taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. For any one of these reasons, Planned Parenthood should no longer be eligible to receive taxpayer dollars.

Most news outlets, and especially Politifact, have failed to examine any of Scott's numerous false public claims to the effect that he lacked the legal authority to terminate Medicaid contracts because these were governed by federal law.

States considering termination of Medicaid Provider Agreements with Planned Parenthood are well within their legal rights. They are not required to qualify providers that are under investigation, that violate federal or state law or that act unethically. Indeed, according to the HHS Office of Inspector General, more than 9,000 providers have been excluded as Medicaid providers over the last two decades.

In the end, facts are facts. And the fact that Planned Parenthood has a rancid history is true. And no organization with such a history, and that is currently under investigation at every level should receive a dime from Florida taxpayers.

So let me restate to Gov. Scott: Do you stand for women's health, or do you side with the money-hungry posers who put up the facade of caring about women's health but time and again engage in a pattern and practice of behavior which would disqualify any other health care provider?

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