

Pro-Life Activists to Protest Building of Nation's Largest Abortion Clinic

✖ On the day commemorating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, thousands of pro-life activists are expected to convene in Houston to protest the building of what is projected to be the nation's largest abortion clinic.

Organized by prayer leader Lou Engle, The Call to Conscience will begin at 9:30 a.m. Monday with a prayer rally near the site of a planned six-story, 78,000 square-foot headquarters for Planned Parenthood Houston, which will sit in the center of four minority neighborhoods. The facility is scheduled to open in the spring, and will include 15 exam rooms, almost twice as many as are in the current clinic, and an ambulatory surgical center that pro-life activists say will be used for late-term abortions.

The prayer rally will be followed by a silent march through the neighborhoods surrounding the clinic site. Engle, founder of The Call and The Call to Action, which is coordinating the protest, said three of the four communities are predominantly Hispanic, and the other is largely African-American. The Guttmacher Institute, which keeps abortion statistics, estimates that more than half of all abortions are performed on black and Hispanic women.

"We felt like the Lord was saying to us: 'This is not right. You need to raise up a prophetic witness against it,'" Engle said. "We need to mobilize prayer, and we need to use it as an occasion to subpoena the conscience of the nation because it is really targeting minorities."

To prepare for rally, Engle will lead a five-hour TheCall

prayer service Sunday beginning at 6 p.m. at Grace Community Church in Houston.

Engle said his group hopes to see construction halted on the abortion clinic, which activists say will be the second-largest in the world after China. But he also hopes the rally will expose what he sees as a racist attempt to target black and Hispanic women to have abortions. Engle said one of the objectives of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger was to "exterminate the Negro population," as she wrote in a 1939 letter.

In a statement released Wednesday, Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas said the new, larger facility was needed to assist the growing number of uninsured residents in the area.

"There is an increasing need for affordable health care in Houston and Harris County because we have more uninsured residents than any other area in the nation," the organization said. "Planned Parenthood is a vital part of the health care safety net. Women and men trust Planned Parenthood, and come from all over Houston and the surrounding areas for affordable care."

In addition to Engle, participants in Monday's event include: Ken Blackwell of the Conservative Action Project, Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, Bishop Harry Jackson of the High Impact Leadership Coalition, Star Parker of the Coalition for Urban Renewal and Education, and Richard Land of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Also attending the rally will be Abby Johnson, former director of a Planned Parenthood facility in Houston. She quit her job and joined the pro-life movement last fall after witnessing for the first time an ultrasound during an abortion procedure.

"I could see the whole profile of the baby 13 weeks head to foot," she said, according to ABC News. "I could see the whole side profile. I could see the probe. I could see the baby try to move away from the probe."

Johnson said the experience changed her forever, and she quit two weeks later.

"That's the result of prayer," Engle said. "It's a radical paradigm shift. I'm calling it a 'prayerdigm' shift."

Engle said he timed the rally to coincide with King's birthday because he sees the pro-life cause as this generation's justice movement.

"We planned it for that weekend because we believe that abortion is not a political issue, it is a justice issue," he said. "And we believe that the true heir to the civil rights movement is the unborn. There are human beings and women who suffer as a result of abortion."

"And it's time for the black voice and the Latino voice to begin to lead another justice movement," he added. "And I believe if they'll take up this voice and this call, they could actually be influential in turning a nation back to righteousness."

King's niece, Alevda King, says her uncle never would have supported abortion, despite popular claims from Planned Parenthood. Martin Luther King received the Margaret Sanger Award from the organization in 1966. But Alveda King said her uncle did not support the organization's "population control" agenda.

"Dr. King was not aware that the population control agenda aimed primarily at Negroes during his lifetime included sterilization, abortion and chemical birth control that would ultimately be linked to stroke, heart attack and breast cancer,'" Alevda King said in *Maafa21*, a documentary that

depicts abortion as a kind of African-American genocide. "He was misled to believe that he would be 'helping his people.' Such help would lead to mass genocide."

Engle's ministry has long been praying for the reversal of Roe v. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court case that legalized abortion. With Jan. 22 marking the 37th anniversary of the landmark ruling, Engle is praying that there will be surge in momentum to "reverse '73 in the 37th year."

"We're seeking to see a surge that maybe historically we can look back and say that year something majorly happened," Engle said of the campaign he's calling the "73-37 Window."

"Right now we don't see enough of that surge," he added. "That's why every voice must be counted."

Pro-life activism doesn't end with legislation, however, Engle notes. He said the church must take responsibility to care for women facing an unplanned pregnancy and for so-called "unwanted" children.

"The church has got to become the answer by a massive adoption movement," he said. "We've got to turn our hearts to the children, and we need to emphasize pregnant mother's care, housing for pregnant mothers. We need to fund the crisis pregnancy centers because that's where we touch individuals in a painful crisis situation."

"We have to become the answer, and we don't have moral authority if we're not willing to be that answer."