

# 6 Alarming Findings in House Panel's Planned Parenthood Probe

Planned Parenthood affiliates profited by transferring parts of aborted babies to outside organizations in violation of the law, a special House panel has concluded after a yearlong investigation.

In a 418-page report released Wednesday, the House Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives also found that other organizations involved in the transfer of fetal tissue broke federal or state law.

In one case, a national Planned Parenthood executive interviewed by staff investigators for the House panel said "it doesn't bother me" that one vendor, StemExpress, paid Planned Parenthood \$55 for an aborted baby's intact brain and then sold it to a customer for more than \$3,000.

"It's none of my concern. It doesn't bother me," the Planned Parenthood executive said, according to the panel's report.

Republican members of the House panel recommend that authorities pursue charges against Planned Parenthood affiliates, which receive taxpayer money, and other entities for violating the law and related regulations.

"It is my hope that our recommendations will result in some necessary changes within both the abortion and fetal tissue procurement industries," the panel's chairman, Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., said in a press release. "Our hope is that these changes will both protect women and their unborn children as well as the integrity of scientific research."

But the panel's ranking member, Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-

Ill., denounced the report Tuesday as “illegitimate.” She said the panel’s eight Republican members drafted the report in secret without input from the panel’s six Democrats, who issued their own report last month.

“They have repeatedly made false claims,” Schakowsky said of Blackburn and Republicans, “including a series of ‘criminal referrals’ to federal, state and local law enforcement officials based on unsourced, unverified documents and information.”

Specifically, the panel’s eight Republicans recommended a criminal investigation of Planned Parenthood of the Gulf Coast based on evidence it violated Texas and U.S. law in fetal tissue transactions.

They also made nine criminal and regulatory referrals in the cases of abortion providers and tissue procurement companies in Arkansas, California and Ohio.

Finally, they recommended that Congress take steps to improve practices in biomedical research, such as establishing ethical guidelines for using tissue from aborted babies.

Well before the House panel concluded its investigation of Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest abortion provider, conservative groups had been calling for Congress to end use of federal taxpayers’ money to fund the organization.

With a new Republican administration beginning when Donald Trump is inaugurated as president Jan. 20, pro-life activists now see that as more than a possibility.

The GOP-led investigation began after the pro-life Center for Medical Progress published a series of undercover videos exploring the market for fetal tissue from aborted babies. The videos featured employees of StemExpress and Planned Parenthood discussing the sale of fetal tissue, sparking allegations that both organizations were profiting from such

transactions.

StemExpress is a for-profit tissue procurement company based in Folsom, California.

Both the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and StemExpress denied illegal activity, although Planned Parenthood said it has stopped taking reimbursements for the cost of donating fetal tissue to companies such as StemExpress.

The new report details evidence that suggests Planned Parenthood and other entities crossed legal and ethical lines while in the fetal tissue market.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America did not respond to The Daily Signal's request for comment on the report.

Below, The Daily Signal compiles six of the strongest findings, some featuring interviews between Planned Parenthood officials and the House panel's top investigators:

1. Several Planned Parenthood affiliates made a profit from the transfer of aborted body parts and other fetal tissue, in violation of federal law prohibiting that.

The report says:

*Accounting documents from middleman tissue organizations showed that several PPFA (Planned Parenthood Federation of America) affiliates made a profit from the transfer of fetal tissue.*

*The middleman investigation, and in particular the investigation of StemExpress, produced information about several PPFA affiliate clinics. In particular, it became clear that StemExpress was doing all the work to obtain consent for donation from individual patients, that StemExpress was doing the work of harvesting the fetal tissue after an abortion was complete and that StemExpress was doing*

*the work and passing on its costs of shipping to customers.*

*This raised a profound issue for the [House Select] panel: Both the middleman and the PPFA affiliate clinic were claiming the same expenses against their revenue to show a loss on fetal tissue sales.*

2. It didn't "bother" a Planned Parenthood executive that one vendor, StemExpress, appeared to make a 2,800-percent profit on a baby's brain harvested from a Planned Parenthood clinic.

Investigators questioned a Los Angeles abortion provider who also is a national Planned Parenthood executive, identified as PP Witness No. 1. These questions are about StemExpress making a profit in its contractual collaboration with Planned Parenthood affiliates after StemExpress sold aborted body parts and organs to customers.

The report says:

*The questions were focused on the markup of an intact fetal brain from \$55 paid to the Planned Parenthood affiliate versus the \$3,340 charge to the customer:*

*Q. Now, here's the scenario, and we'll be done. Tissue tech learns who's available for contributing. She goes and gets the consent. She gets paid a bonus. The Planned Parenthood Clinic, I believe, gets \$55, but it's in the range of [\$]30 to [\$]100, and StemExpress resells that brain for over \$3,000.*

*And you'll notice—you may notice on there [the invoice] that the shipping and maybe some other things are paid for by the customer.*

*Now, does that bother you?*

*A. No.*

*Q. Well, if they—if it was a profit, would it bother you?*

*A. It's really none of my business, no.*

*Q. Is that a concern to you? ... And here's a more granular example. It looks like StemExpress, who for several years only did abortion clinics, now they do lots of stuff, lots of other stuff. But for several years of their life they only got tissue from [Planned Parenthood] Mar Monte, Shasta Pacific, and resold it at prices like this.*

*And I just want to know what's sort of the global management perspective of a Planned Parenthood senior leader like you if that's a 2,800-percent profit.*

*Would that bother you?*

*A. So just so that I'm clear on the question, you're asking me if it bothers me that StemExpress makes money reselling the tissue?*

*Q. Yeah.*

*A. It's none of my concern. It doesn't bother me.*

3. Planned Parenthood abortion doctors would huddle with a tissue procurement technician from Novogenix to learn what aborted body parts that outside person was searching for that day.

Investigators questioned a Los Angeles Planned Parenthood abortion provider (PP Witness No. 1) who also works for the Medical Directors' Council. She answered questions about meetings she had with Novogenix, a tissue procurement company, prior to performing abortions to determine the type of tissue that its technicians wanted that day.

The report says:

Q. Now, do you think that doctors in your position should

huddle in the morning? You say, 'I like to do that.' It's sort of an ongoing tense. do you think the doctors should huddle with a tissue tech to see what they're procuring, [what] is on their list that day?

A. I don't really have a feeling as to whether other doctors did. I like to be helpful.

Q. And so you found it helpful that at least on this one day to huddle with the tissue teach and learn what [the Novogenix employee] was searching for, what orders she had; is that right?

A. I would ask her what tissue she was looking for, yes.

Q. All right. Do you think that's a good idea for the whole fetal tissue donation program, that doctors and the tissue techs huddle each morning to discuss what they're going to try and procure that day?

A. I think it could be helpful.

4. Planned Parenthood doctors appear to have altered their techniques to increase the chances of success in harvesting tissue from abortions that day.

Investigators questioned the same Planned Parenthood abortion provider in Los Angeles about whether she changed procedures to increase the likelihood of a successful procurement of specific tissue.

From the report:

*Q. "There are little things they can make in their technique to increase your success." What are those little things?*

*A. Again, as I mentioned, a change in instruments, a change in where they're grasping the tissue. These are changes in technique that a provider can make for a variety of reason. I—*

*Q. But it could be made to increase the success of fetal tissue donation.*

*A. Yes, that's what I'm saying.*

*Q. OK. Now, so those little techniques that you just described, if there was no fetal tissue donation to increase the likelihood of success, they wouldn't—they wouldn't make those little changes, would they?*

*A. Well, providers make changes in technique for a variety of reasons.*

*Q. Now, the question is: If there was no fetal tissue donation, those little things, changes that would be made to increase their likelihood of success, those wouldn't be made, would they?*

*A. Well, I can't say across the board they wouldn't be made because there [are] probably other reasons that a provider during a procedure—*

*Q. They wouldn't be made for the purpose of getting fetal tissue, would they?*

*A. No, they wouldn't.*

*Q. So they would be made for other reasons.*

*A. Yes.*

*Q. So one set of little changes is chosen for other medical reasons, and one set of little changes could be chosen to increase the likelihood of success.*

*A. Yes.*

5. Planned Parenthood's consent form is "inadequate compared to other entities' consent forms."

Investigators concluded that Planned Parenthood's one-page consent form contains "widely inaccurate claims about past results from fetal tissue research." They also said the consent form "fails to provide basic information about the purpose for which the [tissue] donation is being sought and the precise nature of the 'pregnancy tissue' being donated."

According to the report:

*Numerous witnesses, including senior [Planned Parenthood Federation of America] officials, testified that the consent form is misleading and unethical due to its contention that fetal tissue has been used to find a cure for diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, cancer and AIDS.*

The Los Angeles Planned Parenthood abortion provider, who is also in charge of the national organization's Manual of Medical Standard and Guidelines, said:

*If I'm evaluating the form now, you are correct. To my knowledge there is no cure for AIDS. So that is probably an inaccurate statement. ... a consent form should not have an incorrect statement.*

The report says another witness, a manager of research projects at Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast identified as PP Witness No. 2, testified: "I would agree that that is insufficient for obtaining informed consent, correct."

6. Planned Parenthood affiliate clinics "routinely" violated privacy regulations imposed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, seeking to ease the process of harvesting body parts and other fetal tissue.

From the House panel's report:

*The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy rule (Privacy Rule) protects all*



*individually identifiable health information held or transmitted by a covered entity or its business associate and calls this information protected health information (PHI). PHI identifies an individual, or can reasonably be believed to be useful in identifying an individual, and includes demographic data relating to an individual's health condition, provision of health care or payment for the provision of health care to the individual.*

*The panel's investigation indicates that StemExpress and Planned Parenthood Mar Monte (PPMM), Planned Parenthood Shasta Pacific (PPSP) and Family Planning Specialists Medical Group (FPS) committed systematic violations of the HIPAA Privacy Rule from about 2010 to 2015.*

*These violations occurred when the abortion clinics disclosed patients' individually identifiable health information to StemExpress to facilitate the [tissue procurement business'] efforts to procure human fetal tissue for resale. {eo}*

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