

A Pro-Life Reminder for Planned Parenthood: Don't Mess With Texas

In the days following the 40th commemoration of *Roe v. Wade*, the pro-life cause is winning the legal war against America's largest abortion provider. As reported recently in the *Texas Tribune*, the state of Texas has won round one in the battle to defund abortion providers.

In 2011, the Texas legislature passed what is called the "Affiliate Ban Rule," which prohibits any health provider affiliated with abortion, including Planned Parenthood, from participating in the state's Women's Health Program. In April 2012, a Texas judge granted a preliminary injunction to Planned Parenthood TX, exempting them from the new rule; however, that ruling was overturned in August 2012 by the Fifth Circuit Court.

In response to the passage of this bill, the Obama administration, champion of Planned Parenthood's abortion agenda, threatened to rescind all federal aid Texas receives to help fund its outreach to poor women and children. Yet Texas, it appears, was not to be intimidated.

The state's response was strong and proactive. In light of the imminent cancellation of its federally funded Women's Health Program, Texas created the state-funded Texas Women's Health Program, which offers all the same family planning and health services without subsidizing abortion directly or indirectly.

Planned Parenthood filed another suit against the state of Texas, requesting an injunction from a state district court to delay the implementation of the Affiliate Ban Rule until the court can reach a decision on the merits of the lawsuit. The court refused to grant the injunction, meaning that the

Affiliate Ban Rule could go into effect on Jan. 1, as scheduled. On Jan. 11 a hearing was held on another suit filed by Planned Parenthood patient, Marcela "Marcy" Balquinta, in which a Travis County Court judge denied another request for a temporary injunction on the rule.

In response to the first injunction denial, Planned Parenthood laid out a guilt trip worthy of an Oscar, attempting to manipulate the sympathies of the American public. The *Texas Tribune* reports that Ken S. Lambrecht, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Greater Texas, said, "It is shocking that once again Texas officials are letting politics jeopardize health care access for women." This statement may fool a few, but reality presents a much more optimistic picture. Health care providers available to serve poor women in Texas without violating the abortion affiliate rule are in ample supply.

The website devoted to the Texas Women's Health Program is comprehensive and clear. A quick search on the website debunks Planned Parenthood's claim that women will not have access to health care if abortion providers are eliminated from the program. Women will continue to have a wide range of options for free health care, in Texas cities large and small.

According to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, there are over 3,500 providers available under the new Texas Women's Health Program, of which 1,000 were added since the spring of 2012. Thus, it appears that there are more than enough providers in all parts of the state to serve any woman in need. One is left to wonder if Planned Parenthood is just woefully uninformed regarding women's access to free healthcare outside of their own facilities or if it has another agenda completely.

One thing is for sure, where the federal government has failed, the states have taken initiative. 2011 was a banner year for de-funding abortion providers on the state level,

and this has Planned Parenthood running scared.

Considering Planned Parenthood receives over \$1 million each day from taxpayers' pockets, Planned Parenthood has demonstrated that it will consider all kinds of tactics to keep that money coming. And while the federal government is in the bag for the nation's largest abortion provider, with states like Texas fighting them the pro-life movement can continue to win.

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