

Damage Control: Planned Parenthood Announces “Policy Change” Amid Declining Favorability in Public Opinion

As reported recently, Planned Parenthood CEO Cecile Richards has informed the National Institutes of Health in an open letter that Planned Parenthood will no longer accept any sort of reimbursement for fetal tissues, organs and intact fetal cadavers.

This comes after a summer of disturbing revelations about Planned Parenthood practices via the Center for Medical Progress. The videos produced by investigative journalist David Daleiden show Planned Parenthood executives and physicians discussing the sale of fetal parts and negotiating the prices for those fetal tissues.

“It’s pretty much an admission of guilt,” Daleiden said of Planned Parenthood’s policy change in an extensive Washington Post interview released recently.

He also revealed how saving pre-born babies drives his investigative work, saying of a pre-born fetus: “Its humanity isn’t considered valid, yet it’s precisely that same humanity that makes it valuable for experimentation.”

Daleiden and his team posed as agents for biotechnology companies, supposedly interested in purchasing fetal tissues and organs from Planned Parenthood. Experts in the field of stem cell research stated this week that fetal body parts are ineffective in developing new medical treatments, though the nation’s largest abortion provider has perpetuated this

practice for decades.

Planned Parenthood has attempted to defend itself by trying to persuade the media, the public and Congress that the videos were deceptively edited. Yet an independent forensic review has shown that there was no deception or manipulation in the editing.

Then there's the larger issue. Federal law allows a facility that performs abortions to provide fetal tissues to research companies with the mother's consent. The law limits the amount of remuneration to nothing more than the actual cost of preparing the tissues and transferring them to the buyer. As distasteful as that may be, it is the law.

Has Planned Parenthood sought only to be reimbursed for its costs involved in the preparation of tissues for the buyers? It's a question that leads to another one.

Knowing what the law states, and having watched the videos, one cannot help but ask: If you are legally allowed to charge for your costs, why are you negotiating and haggling for a better price?

If you are truly striving to function within the confines of the law, why are you not handing the buyers a document that shows what your costs are—so that they can accept or reject that figure?

The preparation of such tissue would most certainly have costs related to the salary for the relevant employee's time and for the supplies used. This is not a figure open to negotiation; it is a simple, fixed amount.

With those financial questions still unanswered, one must ask: If Planned Parenthood was doing nothing wrong, why is the nation's largest abortion provider suddenly changing its policy?

Unfortunately, we cannot expect Cecile Richards to tell the truth on this subject—even under oath before Congress, she misstated the facts.

In her testimony, Richards admitted that Planned Parenthood does not perform mammograms and claimed to have never said her organization provides mammograms.

That statement was quickly refuted when a 2011 video surfaced, with Richards stating that mammograms were part of the important services Planned Parenthood provides. Can we expect the truth on the issue of fetal organ trafficking to be fully disclosed?

In light of the facts revealed and questions unanswered, it becomes clear why this policy change comes at this time: Planned Parenthood has much to lose if Congressional investigations continue and if the American people continue to pressure Congress to defund Planned Parenthood.

Planned Parenthood has found itself in great peril. They have apparently decided that they need to do everything possible to prevent further revelations. After all, if they had truly done nothing wrong there should be no reason to change their policy.

They have undoubtedly changed their policy because they hope to avoid further losses, in terms of federal dollars and of public opinion. The fact that they are changing this policy in order to regain the high ground means one thing and one thing only—the Planned Parenthood leadership is terrified about what will be revealed if investigations continue unabated.

Planned Parenthood knows that further revelations will endanger their federal funding—a full forty percent of their budget.

Planned Parenthood knows that there is a very real possibility of serious criminal charges—because illegal trafficking in

fetal tissues is a felony.

If this story stays in the public eye as we approach the 2016 election season, Richards and her leadership team realize there will be incredible pressure on candidates to pledge to defund Planned Parenthood if they are elected.

Planned Parenthood knows it is at a tipping point. They desperately need to see this be just another “flash in the pan”—but if further atrocities are revealed, the tide of public opinion will become a tsunami, and the taxpayer funding that undergirds their unethical business model will be washed away.

Their actions show this is a pivotal moment. Now is not the time for pro-life advocates to rest. Now is the time to make our voices heard. Do not stop sharing information, especially via social media.

Personally, I have contacted sitting legislators and thanked those whose pro-life efforts are meaningful. We can also remind those whose efforts have been less than helpful that we are watching; election season is not far off.

If your district's Representative and your state's Senators are actually pro-abortion, then ask that they watch the Center for Medical Progress videos and then make a public statement on how they intend to handle the issue in light of those videos. Write an open letter to such legislators and send it to your local papers. Call in to radio talk shows and publicly hold such legislators accountable.

We need churches who will speak up for defenseless lives. Ask you pastor to address the subject regularly from the pulpit. The federal rules governing the non-profit status of churches only prevent a church from endorsing a specific candidate; they do not prevent a church from discussing a moral issue such as abortion.

Finally, most important of all, pray. My wife shared a highly relevant quote with me today. Leonard Ravenhill once said: "God can move mountains, but prayer can move God." The fight for life has been a mountain, and now is the time to press on harder than ever before.

Brent Boles, MD has been practicing medicine for two decades as an OB-GYN in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He is a contributor to Bound4LIFE International, a grassroots movement to pray for the ending of abortion and for revival worldwide.

Reprinted with permission from Bound4LIFE