

House Select Panel on Infant Lives Recommends Criminal Charges

If the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States wasn't bad enough news for Planned Parenthood, the latest news from U.S. Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) should terrify the abortionists.

The House of Representatives voted 234-181—mainly along party lines—to continue Blackburn's House Select Panel on Infant Lives until it had completed its mission: to fully investigate potential criminal activity by Planned Parenthood, other abortionists and affiliated organizations. The congresswoman added to the bad news with the following statement after the successful vote:

Our panel was tasked with investigating areas that, prior to the revelations of undercover journalists, received too little attention. For most of us, it is nothing short of an outrage that Planned Parenthood and other abortion clinics supplement their budgets by selling human fetal tissue from aborted babies. The House charged members of this panel with investigating fetal tissue trafficking, second- and third-trimester abortion practices, the standard of care for infants who survive abortions and the role played by our taxpayer dollars in this sector of society. Over the last year, we have held hearings that explored the bioethics surrounding fetal tissue use and that revealed the sobering reality of how some bad actors seek to profit from the sale of fetal tissue in violation of federal law.

The work of our panel is specifically focused on protecting the integrity of research, scientific advancements and voluntary organ donation in America. Evidence we have

uncovered reveals that the unethical and potentially unlawful practices of some bad actors may be putting important research at risk. Considering all that our Panel has identified, despite having barely a year to conduct this investigation, it is now up to us to build on this work, to hold our government accountable and to stop these affronts to human dignity.

Additionally, the panel announced it has recommended criminal investigation of the Houston-based Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast for violating both state and federal laws. The referral was directed to Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, who has not yet issued a statement regarding the referral.

Paxton is likely to aggressively pursue any evidence that has been presented to him.

David Daleiden, founder of the Center for Medical Progress, which produced the undercover investigative videos that led to the panel's creation, issued the following statement upon learning of the criminal referral:

The Select Panel is the only official, comprehensive, nationwide investigation of Planned Parenthood's harvesting and sale of aborted fetal organs, and their findings confirm the criminal activity at Planned Parenthood that CMP's videos documented and show that the wrongdoing goes even deeper than anyone first suspected. The panel has also criminally referred Planned Parenthood's closest business partners in the sale of aborted baby parts to various state and local law enforcement. Law enforcement and elected representatives at all levels must now act quickly to bring Planned Parenthood to justice under the law and prevent any more taxpayer subsidies from flowing to Planned Parenthood's barbaric criminal enterprise.

Troy Newman, President of Operation Rescue, responded:

Rep. Marsha Blackburn has done an outstanding job chairing

the Select Investigative Panel in the midst of vicious opposition from those involved with the abortion cartel. The Select Panel's investigation has been worth every dime of money it has spent pursuing the truth. It has caused the break-up of several illegal aborted baby tissue trafficking schemes and launched investigations around the country.

We very much appreciate their work and continue to look forward to the final results of this investigation that is sure to provide even more criminal referrals for prosecution before its work concludes at the end of the year.

Additionally, Family Research Council President Tony Perkins responded:

The panel's recommendation that Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast be criminally prosecuted is the appropriate next step in bringing justice to bear on a group that clearly sees itself as above the law.

With criminal prosecution a growing possibility, the new Congress should once again use the reconciliation process to redirect taxpayer dollars away from Planned Parenthood.

Last year, Congress blazed a trail in preparation for a president who understands the value of every person, born and unborn. On Election Day, that's exactly what voters delivered. On both the federal and state level, voters empowered the pro-life party to bring an end to the forced partnership between taxpayers and Planned Parenthood.

I thank U.S. Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) and the committee members for their investigative work.

And Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, said:

The Select Panel deserves enormous credit for their work building on the Center for Medical Progress videos and

exposing the network of criminal activity that Planned Parenthood and their allies in the abortion industry have gotten away with for far too long.

It's past time that the abortion giant not only be stripped of federal funding but be criminally charged and held accountable for breaking the law and selling out women—and the body parts of their aborted children—for profit. It is our hope law enforcement acts swiftly and brings justice to Planned Parenthood. {eoa}