

WATCH: 5 Revelations You Missed at the Most Recent Planned Parenthood Hearing in Congress

While the U.S. House votes this week on a measure to defund Planned Parenthood via the complex reconciliation process, key questions remain unanswered—as public tax dollars continue to be entangled with the nonprofit group’s finances.

When a series of undercover videos thrust Planned Parenthood into the national spotlight, leaders in Congress began an investigation to make known any unlawful or unethical actions occurring at Planned Parenthood affiliates nationwide—facilities which currently receive over \$528 million annually from American taxpayers.

Over the past two months, the U.S. House has held four hearings investigating the practices, finances and other aspects of the nation’s largest abortion provider. The latest Planned Parenthood hearing held on October 8 offers instructive insights on where the debate stands.

1. One Woman’s Firsthand Abortion Account Silences Both Sides

While the Planned Parenthood hearings have often been misdirected to other topics—in this hearing, voting rights and Benghazi were mentioned—the vital importance of the issues at hand sometimes shines through.

All the talking points and political critics were silenced when Luana Stoltenberg spoke up. “I was a teenager when I had my first abortion,” she began.

“I was too afraid to tell my parents that I was pregnant, and

my boyfriend didn't want a baby," continued Stoltenberg. "So I made the appointment with Planned Parenthood. I was so scared when I arrived ..." The emotion of her narrative riveted the room, which went silent for over 7 minutes.

Today an adoptive mother living in Iowa, Stoltenberg shares her testimony fearlessly as part of Operation Outcry—a group that has compiled over 4,500 women's firsthand accounts of the devastating trauma caused by abortion.

2. Hear No Evil, See No Evil

Representatives of all political viewpoints played short videos during this hearing. Many members of Congress took their role to examine evidence seriously—carefully watching the statements and footage compiled.

However, for those in the hearing room, a difference between the two sides became clear. When a video pertaining to the pro-choice viewpoint played, the vast majority of the room watched with rapt attention. Yet when the pro-life side played a video, those on the other side looked away.

"We're not likely to learn anything new today," said Rep. Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.) in his opening statement. In a hearing to present evidence, some refused to review the body of information set before them.

In fact, Democratic representatives spent committee time on a vote to strike from the record a live action video they deemed "not germane" to the hearing.

Frustrated by the other side playing politics, Rep. Trent Franks (R-Ariz.) asked one colleague: "I wonder if we'll be able to strike the video from your memory?" The video was reinstated moments later by voice vote.

3. Critic of Video Editing Plays Highly Edited Video

During the hearing, those defending Planned Parenthood

attempted to cast doubt on the veracity of the Center for Medical Progress investigative videos. Rep. Cohen echoed this refrain, stating, "This entire exercise is based on heavily edited videos."

Cohen proceeded to show a video compilation, introducing it as "a portion of the unedited video"—derived from the complete footage released by the Center for Medical Progress.

So while Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) opened the hearing stating his intent to "correct the false impressions created by the highly edited, highly misleading videos," his close colleague introduced another such video into the record.

4. Another Committee Chairman Corrects Frequent Misstatement

"There is no ground to stand on regarding the illegality of Planned Parenthood's actions," stated Cohen, referencing a recent CNN interview with Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah)—who chaired the committee hearing where Planned Parenthood CEO Cecile Richards recently testified.

"I've heard my name several times invoked," began Chaffetz. "The hearing we conducted in the Oversight Committee was very narrowly focused on the finances," he said pointedly. "It's a bit of stretch to say I have done some conclusive investigation on all the actions of Planned Parenthood."

"Planned Parenthood has annual revenues of \$127 million more than their expenses," continued Chaffetz. "They were sending money overseas, they were spending money and giving it political organizations, they have a lot of shared services—I think these are legitimate questions as we look at the finances of an organization that is structured as a nonprofit."

"Why do we send money to an organization where the revenues exceed expenses by \$127 million dollars annually? It doesn't

sound like an organization that needs to be supplemented by taxpayer dollars,” Chaffetz concluded.

5. Liberal Congressmen Brings Up Horrific Practice of Sterilizing Women

In defending his pro-choice views, Rep. Luis Gutiérrez (D-Ill.) made a startling admission: “My mother’s only option was the one option the government of the United States gave her—which was sterilization. And for hundreds of thousands of Puerto Rican women, that was the only option.”

Writing in *The Hill* last week, Alliance Defending Freedom attorney Casey Mattox considers who was behind this practice. “There’s one problem with this historical narrative. The International Planned Parenthood Federation was sterilizing Puerto Rican women,” Mattox writes.

Citing several research sources related to the history of eugenics, Mattox notes, “As alluded to in Gutiérrez’s rightful condemnation, this sterilization program is one of the most shameful in history.”

Douglas Rivlin, Press Secretary for Rep. Gutiérrez, responded curtly in the article’s comment section. “Congressman Gutiérrez is well aware of the history on this matter and what his mother and others of her generation endured,” he stated.

The Congressional investigation of Planned Parenthood will continue in the coming months, primarily through a recently appointed bipartisan Select Committee.

As many differing perspectives clash in the hearings, the testimonies of women directly involved stand out—whether it’s a former Planned Parenthood employee like Sue Thayer, a former client such as Luana Stoltenberg, or abortion survivors Gianna Jessen and Melissa Ohden.

All of them also happen to be women of strong Christian

conviction. "God had a plan for my life. I found hope and forgiveness in Jesus," said Stoltenberg near her testimony's conclusion. "Life began to change."

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