

Planned Parenthood Closings in Southwest Iowa Answer to Pro-Life Prayers

As far as the peaceful pro-life advocates in Red Oak and Creston, Iowa, are concerned, their prayers have been answered. The **Planned Parenthood** facilities in both southwest Iowa towns are shutting down.

Thomas More Society-Omaha confirmed that a sign hanging on the door at the Red Oak abortion facility declares that the facility will be “consolidated” with another Iowa Planned Parenthood, effective June 18. The notice of these closings comes after months of prayer outside of these abortion clinics by dedicated pro-life advocates.

“The closing of two Planned Parenthood abortion facilities in Iowa is a great victory for life,” said Thomas More Society-Omaha attorney Martin Cannon. “Credit goes to the prayerful people of Red Oak and our listening God, but Thomas More Society also had the honor of assisting these men and women. By clarifying the existence of public property in front of the clinic, we were able to work with the police of Red Oak to ensure that the people’s First Amendment rights to assemble on public property were respected.”

The **pro-life** prayer vigil and sidewalk counseling efforts at the Red Oak facility were jeopardized during the Spring 2014 40 Days for Life campaign, when Planned Parenthood challenged the right of pro-life advocates to stand on the grass parkway. The abortion provider tried to have the praying crowd arrested and charged with criminal trespassing, claiming that those praying were on private property.

Initially, the police concurred with Planned Parenthood, but after intervention by Cannon and the Thomas More Society-

Omaha, the Red Oak city administrator verified the public right of way. Legally equivalent to a public sidewalk, this is a “traditional public forum” in the eyes of the law and constitutes a place where people have a First Amendment right to assemble.

Many in the area believe that the Planned Parenthood sites fell victim to the unrelenting presence of those peacefully offering life-saving alternatives to abortion. Regardless, the fact is that the Red Oak abortion facility and its sister clinic in Creston, 40 miles down the same highway, are closing.