

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE

2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115

Majority (202) 225-2927
Minority (202) 225-3641

July 17, 2015

Ms. Cecile Richards
President
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
434 West 33rd Street
New York, NY 10001

Dear Ms. Richards:

Pursuant to Rules X and XI of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce seeks information and requests a briefing regarding your organization's practices relating to fetal tissue collection and sale or donation.

In a video made public on July 14, 2015, Planned Parenthood Federation of America's Senior Director of Medical Services, Dr. Deborah Nucatola, is seen making certain statements about abortion procedures and fetal tissue collection and sale to tissue companies. For example, Dr. Nucatola acknowledged that providers may perform an abortion in a certain way to preserve fetal tissue for research purposes, stating that "you're just kind of cognizant of where you put your graspers, you try to intentionally go above and below the thorax, so that, you know, we've been very good at getting heart, lung, liver, because we know that, so I'm not gonna crush that part" Dr. Nucatola explained that some providers will change the presentation of the fetus in order to ensure that the tissue is intact. Further, she stated that companies that collect fetal tissue from Planned Parenthood affiliates will request certain types of tissue, including "intact hearts," "AV nodes," lungs, and liver. Dr. Nucatola also described how affiliates and tissue companies set a price for the sale of each specimen.

Dr. Nucatola's statements raise most troubling questions with regard to your organization's practices when performing abortions and whether those practices are consistent with federal law, including those laws restricting partial birth abortions and the sale of human fetal tissue. A statement issued by your organization on July 14 asserted that the video of Dr. Nucatola was "heavily edited" and "falsely portrays Planned Parenthood's participation in tissue donation programs that support lifesaving scientific research." The statement also noted that Planned Parenthood engages in fetal tissue collection "with full, appropriate consent from patients and under the highest ethical and legal standards."

Given your statement that this video falsely portrays Planned Parenthood and the questions raised by the video, we respectfully request that Dr. Nucatola provide a briefing to committee staff no later than July 31, 2015, to explain specifically the context and meaning of her statements on the video, what comments were edited or not portrayed accurately, and to provide information so that we may better understand your organization's practices and standards relating to the collection and sale of fetal tissue. Dr. Nucatola should be prepared to address the following issues:

1. Your organization's consent procedures for fetal tissue sale;
2. Your organization's practices for collecting fetal tissue, including guidance to, and training for, providers and whether the process or timing of an abortion is manipulated for the purposes of collecting fetal tissue;
3. The price or fee collected by Planned Parenthood for fetal tissue, including what guidance or criteria, if any, Planned Parenthood provides to its affiliates on prices and fees, and the total amount of fees collected and costs expended by Planned Parenthood over the last ten years relating to fetal tissue;
4. The relationship between Planned Parenthood and the organizations or companies to which it provides fetal tissue, including your organization's handling of conflict of interest issues with regard to collection and donation or sale of fetal tissue, and whether your organization solicits and/or receives financial contributions from entities receiving fetal tissue from your organization; and
5. The number of years Planned Parenthood has engaged in fetal tissue collection and whether and how Planned Parenthood oversees the collection and donation or sale of fetal tissue by its affiliates.

In addition to this briefing, we respectfully request that Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its affiliates preserve and retain all documents relating or referring to the collection, sale and/or donation of fetal tissue.

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact Charles Ingebretson of the committee staff at (202) 225-2927.

Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Chairman



Tim Murphy
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations



Marsha Blackburn
Vice Chairman



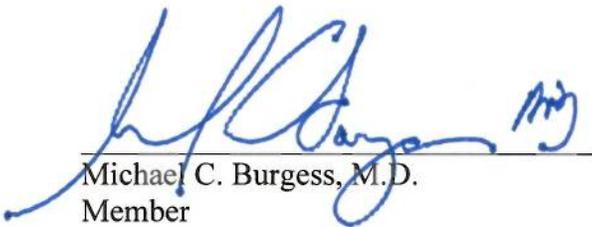
David McKinley
Vice Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations



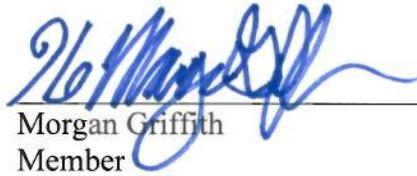
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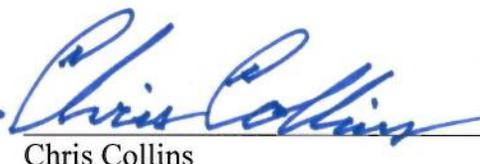
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Richard Hudson
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Chris Collins
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Kevin Cramer
Member
Subcommittee on Oversight
and Investigations

cc: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member

The Honorable Diana DeGette, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

The Honorable Gene Green, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health