

Governor Jay Inslee

Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Attorney General Bob Ferguson

Office of the Attorney General
1125 Washington Street SE
PO Box 40100
Olympia, WA 98504-0100

Secretary of Health John Wiesman

Office of the Secretary
Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 47890
Olympia, Washington 98504-7890

July 31, 2015

Dear Governor Inslee, Attorney General Ferguson, and Secretary Wiesman,

The undersigned organizations stand with the Planned Parenthood affiliates throughout the state of Washington and across the country during this time of vicious political attack. And we stand with the millions of patients who rely on Planned Parenthood for health care. Planned Parenthood has provided compassionate and critical health care to women, men, and young people for over 100 years and is an integral and necessary part of our health care system. Requests to launch harassing and unwarranted investigations into Planned Parenthood's operations and funding are purely politically motivated attacks that distract from advancing the health of women and families in Washington State.

The organization that released heavily edited videos did so as part of an extreme and entrenched campaign to end the availability of lawful and safe abortion in this country. This is not the first time that Planned Parenthood has been targeted in an underhanded manner by those who want to take away the right to abortion and the full range of reproductive health services. There have been other heavily edited videos, attempts at both the federal and state levels to take away Planned Parenthood's funding, and attacks targeting organizations that work with Planned Parenthood (such as the recent outrageous decision to delay a bill establishing a commemorative coin that would raise funds for breast cancer research because one of the beneficiaries would have been Susan G. Komen For the Cure, which funds Planned Parenthood to provide breast cancer screening). Even here in Washington State, anti-choice legislators and others have called on the State to investigate and defund the high quality services that Planned Parenthood provides.

Through it all, Planned Parenthood affiliates in Washington have continued to provide more than 100,000 women and men annually with high quality affordable health care. Planned Parenthood provides a wide range of health services, including abortion, birth control, breast and cervical cancer

screenings, and STD and HIV screenings. For many uninsured and under-insured people, Planned Parenthood is the only source they have for these services.

The organizations signing this letter work closely with Planned Parenthood and know of its employees' dedication to assisting their patients and advocating for women throughout the country. Many of us work on behalf of those Washingtonians who rely on Planned Parenthood's compassionate, high quality care and know how important it is that it continues to be available to those who need it.

Planned Parenthood clinics that participate in fetal donation programs assist those patients who choose to donate fetal tissue for research – research that has led to important advances in health care, such as vaccines for rubella, and has the potential to lead to breakthroughs in fighting Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's, and heart disease. Planned Parenthood and other providers are an important source of tissue for this potentially life-saving research. As Washington is a state rich with universities and research institutions that have contributed to groundbreaking scientific discoveries, it is especially fitting that we should honor and respect the women and their families who make the decision to donate tissue for scientific and medical research, not demean them and the providers who carry out their wishes.

We support Planned Parenthood and ask that you see these politically-motivated attacks for what they are – an attempt to manipulate public opinion, to vilify trusted health care providers, and to advance efforts to take away women's access to abortion and other important health services. Calls to investigate Planned Parenthood for wrongdoing or eliminating public funding are simply unwarranted and distract us all from advancing the health of women and families in Washington State.

Sincerely,

American Civil Liberties Union of Washington
American Congress of Obstetricians and
Gynecologists, Washington Section
Fuse Washington
Legal Voice
Physicians for Reproductive Health
NARAL Pro-Choice Washington
National Council of Jewish Women,
Seattle Chapter

National Women's Political Caucus of Washington
Northwest Health Law Advocates
OneAmerica
Seattle Women's Commission
The CAIR Project
Washington Community Action Network
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic
Violence
Win/Win Action

cc: Senator Sharon Nelson, 34th District
Senator Mark Schoesler, 9th District
Representative Frank Chopp, 43rd District
Representative Dan Kristiansen, 39th District