



## Texas to Eliminate Medicaid Payments to Planned Parenthood

Texas Health and Human Services Inspector General Stuart Bowen gave official notice to Planned Parenthood on December 20 that the “reproductive health services” organization — which is the largest single provider of abortions in the United States — will no longer receive funding from the Texas Medicaid program.



Planned Parenthood’s practice of selling the body parts of unborn babies killed in its facilities was cited by state officials as being a primary reason for the defunding. The sales received widespread attention after release of undercover videos recorded by the Center for Medical Progress at the Planned Parenthood facility in Bryan, Texas.

In his notice letter, Bowen said the undercover videos showed that “Planned Parenthood violated state and federal law,” adding that the abortion provider showed a “willingness to charge more than the costs incurred for procuring fetal tissue.”

“Your misconduct is directly related to whether you are qualified to provide medical services in a professionally competent, safe, legal and ethical manner,” Bowen stated in the notice. “Your actions violate generally accepted medical standards, as reflected in state and federal law, and are Medicaid program violations that justify termination.”

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The *Texas Tribune*, which broke the story, reported that the cut-off in Medicaid funding will occur in 30 days. However, that cut-off day can be delayed if the organization appeals the state’s decision within the next 15 days by requesting an administrative hearing with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

In response to the decision, Yvonne Gutierrez, executive director of Planned Parenthood Texas Votes, the organization’s political arm, stated: “Planned Parenthood continues to serve Medicaid patients and will seek a preliminary injunction in an ongoing lawsuit filed in November 2015, following the state’s original threats to take action against Planned Parenthood’s patients.”

The *Tribune* reported that Planned Parenthood filed a lawsuit in November 2015 in response to a notice of intent from Texas officials the previous month informing the organization that the state intended to remove it from the public insurance program. The state gave Planned Parenthood 30 days to respond to its notice and request an “informal resolution meeting” with health commission attorneys. If the organization does not request such a meeting, said the notice, Texas would issue a “final notice of termination,” of Planned Parenthood’s participation in Medicaid.



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on December 22, 2016

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The notice said the order would go into effect 15 days after Planned Parenthood received it.

However, since the state did not act immediately, but waited until this month to issue the notice, Planned Parenthood has continued to provide services under the Medicaid program. Governor Greg Abbott and other state officials have not provided an explanation for why the termination notice was delayed for more than a year.

With the stop-funding notice finally being served, Planned Parenthood intends to pursue the lawsuit it filed last year in the U.S. court in Austin.

LifeNews.com reported in its coverage of this story that Planned Parenthood affiliates in Texas currently receive \$3.1 million in Medicaid funds annually.

On December 14, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a final rule “to clarify the regulations for family planning services under Title X of the Public Health Service Act and protect access to family planning services.” The federal government recognizes abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood as “family planning services.” Therefore this HHS rule prevents states from blocking federal Title X funding going to abortion companies like Planned Parenthood.

Last week, President Barack Obama, a close friend of the abortion industry, approved a new Department of Health and Human Services rule that will essentially prohibits states from defunding the abortion business.

The regulation takes effect on January 18, 2017, 30 days after its publication in the *Federal Register* on December 19, 2016. Donald Trump will be inaugurated as president two days later.

Responding to the HHS rule, Rep. Diane Black (R-Tenn.) told LifeNews.com:

With this rule, we see an administration that has become unglued at the knowledge of the impending pro-life sea change in Washington, D.C.

President Obama knows that hope is rising for the innocent victims of Planned Parenthood’s brutality and the big abortion industry’s days of taxpayer-funded windfalls are numbered. We should not be surprised that his administration would lash out with this eleventh hour power grab on the way out the door, but I am certain this rule will not stand for long.

President-elect Trump promised to sign a bill to defund Planned Parenthood as long as it continues to perform abortions, reported LifeNews.

If Trump’s promised legislation is signed into law, it would undoubtedly have an impact on the pending lawsuit that Planned Parenthood has filed to stop Texas from defunding Medicaid payments to the organization.

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