



Written by [James Murphy](#) on June 6, 2019

Missouri Judge Allows Planned Parenthood to Keep Muzzle on Physicians

Circuit Court Judge Michael Stelzer has ruled that testimony from doctors who worked at Reproductive Health Services of Planned Parenthood in the St. Louis region, but were not employed by Planned Parenthood, is not necessary in determining whether the clinic can remain open.

On Saturday, the State of Missouri served subpoenas on four physicians and trainees who had worked at the clinic but were not Planned Parenthood employees. Stelzer, in effect, vacated those subpoenas.



In his bid to have the subpoenas rescinded, Russell Lane Makepeace, an attorney for two of the non-staff doctors, told the court that they “really have nothing to add about the compliance of Planned Parenthood for the purpose of evaluating their license.”

But John Sauer, an attorney for the state, didn’t agree, saying to the court that the testimony of the non-staff doctors was “highly relevant” since it involved procedures at the clinic that are relevant to the license-renewal investigation.

“The argument that their testimony is irrelevant is difficult for me to address because I fail to understand it,” Sauer said.

Stelzer agreed with Planned Parenthood. Citing the limited scope of the hearing, Stelzer ruled that testimony from the non-staff doctors “will not be relevant” to the case and “would present an undue burden and hardship” on the non-staff doctors.

The clinic — the last abortion clinic currently operating in Missouri — [was set to be closed last week](#) due to non-compliance with Missouri state law, which may result in the loss of the clinic’s license.

However, Planned Parenthood sued and Stelzer agreed to allow the infanticide provider to remain open while the licensing matter is settled.

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The governing body over the state’s abortion industry, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), declined to renew the clinic’s license last week over concerns about patient safety, which include botched abortions, “failed surgical abortions in which the women remained pregnant,” and other potential legal violations.

The director of Missouri’s DHSS, Dr. Randall Williams, claims that many of the complaints against the clinic stem from March inspections that uncovered several deficiencies in the clinic’s procedures. The DHSS cited “at least one incident in which patient safety was gravely compromised.”

While Planned Parenthood and their advocates are concerned about “access” to abortions, Williams and the state are concerned that the St. Louis clinic might be unsafe from a medical perspective. “We can



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never sacrifice safety for access,” Williams said. “We have to have both.”

Colleen McNicholas, an abortionist at the facility, considered the subpoenas issued to the non-staff doctors an unnecessary abuse, and lauded Stelzer’s decision. “Planned Parenthood is also relieved that doctors in training will not have to come to court and face the unwarranted harassment we’ve long said is inappropriate,” McNicholas said. “We look forward to another day in this fight.”

M’Evie Mead, director of policy and organizing for Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri, claims the state is playing a “political game” and asserts that the state has not advised Planned Parenthood of any issues related to patient safety.

“The department, if they have any concerns about health and safety, especially grave concerns, they are obligated to outline them in clear words and say, ‘this is a deficiency and it’s at this level.’ They have not done that,” Mead said after the hearing.

In reality, DHSS has many reasons to be concerned about the safety of patients at the clinic, the findings of their March inspections aside. Since 2009, the clinic has had to [call 911 more than 70 times](#) for emergencies that occurred during surgical abortions. [At least three of those 911 calls happened during a 22-day-period ending on May 15](#) of this year.

Remember “safe, legal, and rare?” Pro-abortion activists seem to have dropped the safe and the rare and are now only concerned with the legal part.

Judge Stelzer’s ruling allows Planned Parenthood to hide testimony of supposed professionals who witnessed (and perhaps participated in) the procedures going on at the facility. When those procedures result in botched abortions and an abundance of 911 calls, shouldn’t they be investigated, especially if you’re concerned about women’s health?

Reagan Barklage, the western regional director of Students for Life of America, who spoke at a pro-life rally outside the clinic said it well: “Planned Parenthood should not be above the law. If they want to operate like a medical facility then they need to meet the standards like any other medical facility.”



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