

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 7, 2018

Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

We are writing to express deep concern with a recent report compiling several court cases, state health department reports, and testimonials from former Planned Parenthood employees that highlight multiple instances where Planned Parenthood facilities across the country have repeatedly and deliberately failed to report the suspected sexual abuse of minors in their care. As you know, Planned Parenthood is the largest recipient of Title X family planning funds, receiving about \$60 million annually. In light of this report and the influx of federal resources to this organization, we respectfully request that you investigate Planned Parenthood, as well as other current Title X recipients to determine how widespread the failure of abuse reporting is.

As you know, since 1999, federal law has annually included the expectation that all recipients of federal Title X family planning funds follow all state laws requiring the reporting of suspected child sexual abuse, rape, and incest:

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no provider of services under Title X of the Public Health Service Act shall be exempt from any State law requiring notification or the reporting of child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, or incest.”

The Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) Office of Population Affairs reminds Title X recipients of the need to follow state reporting requirements annually in its grant announcements. The requirement is also reiterated in the latest Office of Population Affairs Title X manual from April 2014.

We know that reporting cases of abuse or suspected abuse is of increasing concern to your agency. In HHS’ recently published proposed rule governing the Title X family planning program, a new provision was incorporated to “address explicitly the requirement for Title X projects to comply with all State and local laws regarding the notification or reporting of crimes involving sexual exploitation, child abuse, child molestation, sexual abuse, rape, incest, intimate partner violence, and human trafficking.” This new provision interprets federal appropriations law so as to require Title X recipients to report on intimate partner violence as well as instances of human trafficking for all ages. This is in addition to reporting on sexual abuse cases involving minors.

Despite the increased attention to combatting sexual abuse, the cases detailed in the enclosed report demonstrate that Planned Parenthood has continuously embraced a culture of turning a blind eye to suspected abuse. Rather than reporting suspicious incidents to authorities as state law often requires, Planned Parenthood has chosen repeatedly to perform abortions on children as young as 12 and 13 years old and then return these young clients to their abusers. The following cases document how Planned Parenthood's failure to report has allowed abusers to get away with years of additional, ongoing abuse of their victims.

- Washington, 2014: George Savanah had repeatedly raped his daughter and impregnated her when she was 14, 16, and 17 years old. Each time he got her pregnant, he took her to Planned Parenthood and forced her to get an abortion. Planned Parenthood repeatedly failed to report the suspicious incidents to authorities, even though the victim was a minor.
- Colorado, 2012: Timothy David Smith had been sexually abusing his stepdaughter for seven years. When she became pregnant at 13, he took her to Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood performed an abortion without notifying the child's parents and without reporting the suspected abuse as required by Colorado law. Planned Parenthood then sent the child back home with Smith, where he continued to rape and abuse her.
- Ohio, 2004: Denise Fairbanks had been sexually abused by her father since she was 13. When she became pregnant at age 16, he took her to Planned Parenthood and forced her to have an abortion. Denise told the staff that she was being forced to have sex, but they ignored her pleas and refused to report the incident to authorities. After the abortion, Denise was sent back home with her father, where he continued to abuse her.

Despite the evidence that reporting problems seems to be a pervasive part of the organization's culture, Planned Parenthood facilities continue to receive Title X funding.

The report's findings suggest that abusers feel comfortable taking their victims to Planned Parenthood. We are therefore requesting an investigation into Title X recipients, particularly Planned Parenthood, to determine how widespread this failure is and if there are other instances where Planned Parenthood failed in its duty to report suspected child abuse to local authorities and to HHS.

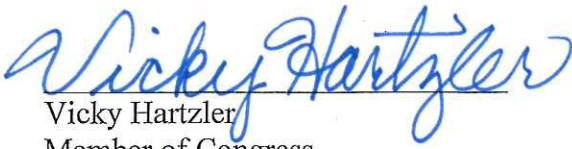
We specifically request the following information from HHS:

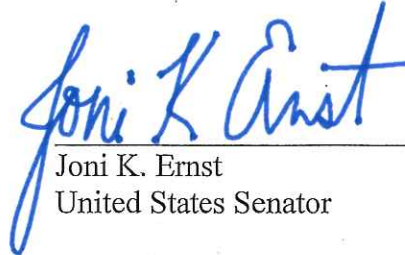
- All records (including from regional offices) regarding any and all incidents of Planned Parenthood Title X recipients' failure to report suspected sexual abuse of minors in their care;
- A record of the steps taken to bring the recipient into compliance each time it was discovered that a Planned Parenthood Title X recipient failed to report suspected abuse, and documentation of the consequences for each recipient that refused to come into compliance; and
- Data from Planned Parenthood Title X facilities for the past 10 years showing in the aggregate how many children below their particular states' age of consent received services that would indicate they were sexually active (such as abortions and tests or treatments for sexually transmitted infections), as well as the number of reports of

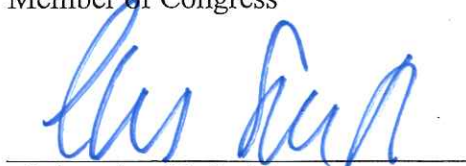
suspected child sexual abuse Planned Parenthood made to law enforcement during that same period.

Thank you for your attention to this pressing matter and we look forward to receiving your response.


Sincerely,


Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress


Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator


Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

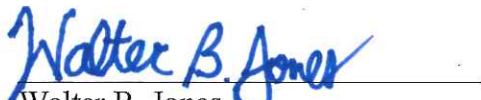

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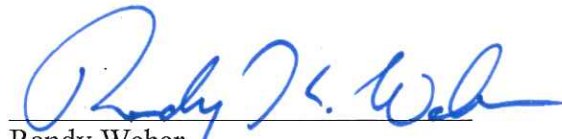

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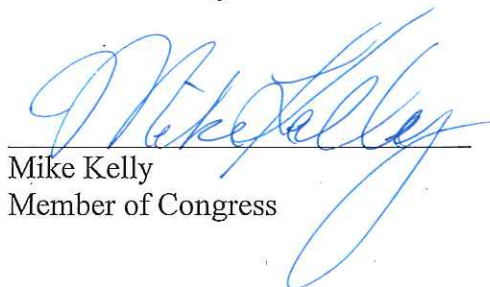

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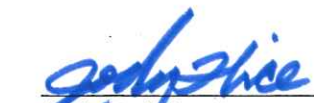

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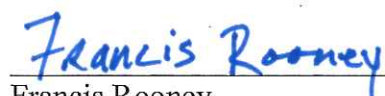

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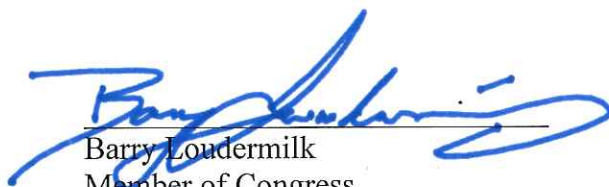

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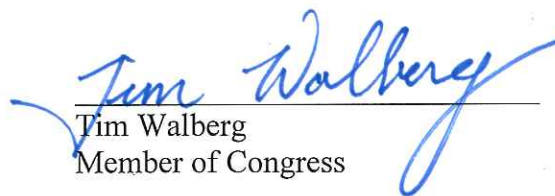
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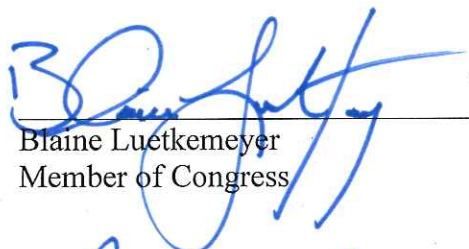
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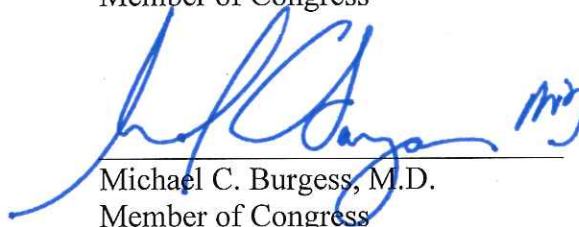
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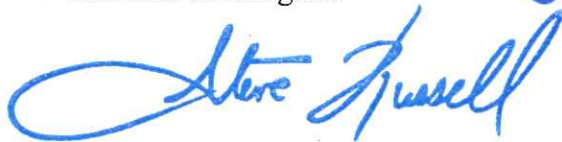
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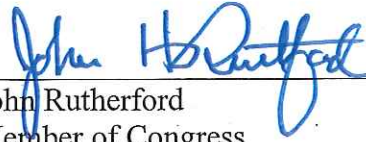
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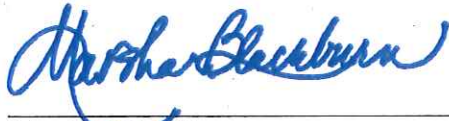
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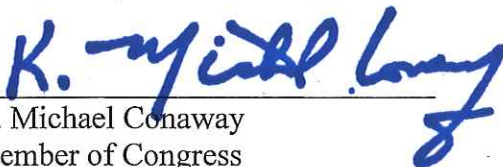
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