

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio
Planned Parenthood of Southwest Ohio**

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Planned Parenthood Files Federal Lawsuit to Protect Abortion Access in Ohio

Lawsuit says Planned Parenthood handles medical tissue like other health care providers, and attack from state is attempt to ban abortion

Columbus, OH -- Attorneys for Planned Parenthood affiliates in Ohio filed suit today in federal court to protect access to safe, legal abortion for women in Ohio. On Friday, Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine went directly to press with inflammatory and false allegations against Planned Parenthood -- claiming in a press conference that the nonprofit improperly handled fetal tissue, which is absolutely not true. Planned Parenthood learned of these claims through press—rather than through formal communication with the Department of Health—and the attorney general failed to allow Planned Parenthood to address these false allegations. On the basis of these bogus claims, DeWine threatened to take legal action against Planned Parenthood, and to introduce legislation that would further restrict access to abortion in Ohio.

In the lawsuit filed today, Planned Parenthood makes clear:

- Planned Parenthood uses licensed medical removal companies who handle fetal tissue respectfully and safely, in accordance with the law that's been in place for 40 years in Ohio.
- Planned Parenthood handles fetal tissues just like other health care providers handle all sorts of medical material. It is either treated for sterilization or incinerated, and then disposed of.
- The false claims are motivated by politics, not by the facts and not by medicine, and are intended to ban abortion in the state.

The Governor and Attorney General in Ohio have done everything possible to eliminate access to safe, legal abortion -- [secretly writing abortion restrictions into law](#), working to close health centers, and even appointing the head of Ohio Right to Life to the state medical board. In recent years, Ohio [has shuttered more abortion](#) providers than any other state but Texas, even forcing women to [cross the border into Michigan](#) to get abortions.

Statement from Jerry Lawson, CEO of Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio:

“Planned Parenthood handles medical tissue just like other health care providers do. We work with licensed medical removal companies to handle fetal tissue respectfully and safely. It's clear from the Attorney General's press conference that we've acted properly and legally, and this is just part of his longstanding political agenda to ban abortion in all cases. We won't let that happen.”

Statement from Stephanie Kight, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio:

“The reality is that we handle medical tissue just like other health care providers do, and we always have. We're inspected regularly to ensure that we're handling fetal tissue properly and legally. Politicians in Ohio will stop at nothing to ban abortion in all cases in our state. Today,

we're asking a federal court to prevent the state from this plainly political attempt to restrict women's access to safe and legal abortion."

Planned Parenthood's health centers comply with all laws and regulations that require safe fetal tissue disposal that is respectful. Fetal tissue is handled by a licensed removal company, just like other health care providers use for all types of medical material. Ohio's requirements for how fetal tissue should be disposed of have been in place since 1974. The state is now claiming that Planned Parenthood is in violation of this regulation, despite the fact that for decades, Planned Parenthood has followed these regulations and has never been cited by the state for violation. In fact, the Ohio Department of Health has inspected Planned Parenthood's health centers annually for the last decade, and at no time have they raised concerns about these practices.

On Friday, Ohio's Attorney General confirmed that the accusations that Planned Parenthood "sold fetal tissue" were completely unfounded and untrue. These false claims have been made and disproved over and over again. Officials in eight other states (Washington, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri and South Dakota) have now cleared Planned Parenthood affiliates of all wrongdoing. In addition, seven states (Iowa, Delaware, Idaho, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Colorado) have declined to even investigate Planned Parenthood — finding nothing to substantiate claims of wrongdoing. These new accusations that Planned Parenthood is improperly disposing of fetal tissue are also flat-out false.

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Planned Parenthood is the nation's leading provider and advocate of high-quality, affordable health care for women, men, and young people, as well as the nation's largest provider of sex education. With approximately 700 health centers across the country, Planned Parenthood organizations serve all patients with care and compassion, with respect and without judgment. Through health centers, programs in schools and communities, and online resources, Planned Parenthood is a trusted source of reliable health information that allows people to make informed health decisions. We do all this because we care passionately about helping people lead healthier lives.