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## MAKING PLANNED PARENTHOOD LEGAL

By Steve Bakke  March 25, 2018



### *Here's what provoked me:*

*One of the most absurd arguments that Planned Parenthood uses to claim compliance with the Hyde Amendment is that abortions comprise only 3% of total services. "Hyde" prohibits public funds from being used to pay for abortion. In order to make that claim, Planned Parenthood must assert that each service costs their organization exactly the same amount – whether it's an in-house abortion procedure, or a simple mammogram referral to an unrelated organization. That's ridiculous.*

### *Here's my response:*

#### **Making Planned Parenthood Legal**

Isabel Francis asserted my "ignorance of the facts" about Planned Parenthood in her 3/25 letter, "Its services help many." My 3/21 letter, "Cost of Abortions?" used a simple computation to demonstrate that Planned Parenthood is in violation of the Hyde Amendment which prohibits using public dollars to fund abortions.

Francis asserts that abortions are only 3% of Planned Parenthood's services and that "Cost is irrelevant." In fact, the Hyde Amendment makes cost allocation central to determining compliance. The organization arbitrarily assumes all services cost the same, thereby equating mammogram outsource referrals with performing abortions. Phone calls don't cost the same as surgical procedures.

I agree with Francis that public funds should be used for other health care services. If currently in compliance, Planned Parenthood would be willing to organizationally separate abortion services from general healthcare. That would make it "legal."

Sadly, "Hyde" and Roe v. Wade changed a morality issue to a political one. As such, I can challenge Planned Parenthood's legality only based on funding – and that's easy. What we need, in light of new knowledge and technology, is renewed discussions about abortion. And that debate should be centered on the definition of human life and the sanctity thereof.