

**Iris E. Harvey  
Opponent Testimony  
House Bill 149  
Ohio House Health Committee  
May 10, 2017**

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in opposition to House Bill 149. My name is Iris E. Harvey, and I am President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio and Planned Parenthood Advocates of Ohio.

Ohio law already states, “No person shall experiment upon or sell the product of human conception that is aborted (2919.14). Since 1974, Ohio has required that fetal tissue be disposed of in a safe and respectful manner, and Planned Parenthood’s health centers have always complied, and continue to comply, with all the laws and regulations regarding safe fetal tissue disposal that is respectful. Fetal tissue is handled just like other health care providers use for all types of medical material, and Planned Parenthood has never been cited for a violation.

Purportedly, this unnecessary legislation is a direct response to an investigation by the Ohio Attorney General in 2015 after highly edited videos by anti-abortion activists falsely accused Planned Parenthood of selling medical material. The investigation found no evidence that Planned Parenthood was selling this material and the videos have been proven to be false - and their creators now face 15 felony charges in California.

To be clear, Planned Parenthood medical health professionals follow the laws as prescribed by the state and federal government. They provide care and support to each woman, helping her to make the decision for herself, and enabling her to take care of her health and well-being. This legislation labels medical professionals as “abortionists.” This label is clearly an attempt to intimidate and shame those medical professionals who engage in the safe and legal, constitutionally protected, procedure of abortion.

The legislation increases the criminal penalty for actions that are already illegal under the Ohio Revised Code. Based on testimony heard last week, there have been no prosecutions under the existing law. This is just another attempt to further target abortion providers in Ohio and attempt to limit this constitutionally protected health care procedure. Backers of this bill make wildly inaccurate claims that medical material is being sold for profit in Ohio. That is patently false and they know it. This is a politically motivated attack against Planned Parenthood and other abortion service providers that strictly adhere to the law.

Instead of spending any more hard-earned Ohio tax dollars on this unnecessary and redundant legislation, please work to expand health care for those most vulnerable members of our Ohio communities. We are stronger when we support each other, not when we debate divisive legislation about a constitutionally protected medical procedure. On behalf of Planned Parenthood’s 81,000 patients across Ohio, I ask that you vote in opposition to House Bill 149.