

August 20, 2010

Mr. Mark Bowden, Executive Director  
Iowa Board of Medicine  
400 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite C  
Des Moines, IA 50309

Dear Mr. Bowden,

We understand that the Iowa Board of Medicine has received a complaint to investigate the practices of Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, specifically the use of telemedicine to dispense RU-486, resulting in a medical abortion. The signers of this letter represent pro-life and pro-family organizations mainly across the State of Iowa, but also across the country, and we wish to express our serious concern about this practice taking place in our state.

It is our understanding that Iowa law mandates that a physician must perform abortions. It is also our understanding that FDA protocols recommend usage of RU-486 only up to the seventh week of pregnancy. Planned Parenthood of the Heartland appears to be violating both standards, both by the physician not being present with the patient, and also by dispensing RU-486 up to the ninth week of pregnancy.

The absence of a licensed physician performing a physical examination poses a significant health threat to the mother of the unborn child. An examination could reveal potential risk factors that may prevent a physician from prescribing RU-486 to the patient. These risk factors, if unidentified, could lead to excessive bleeding, infection, and death. Planned Parenthood of the Heartland is ignoring this basic tenet of care by passing responsibility and directing patients to the emergency room if complications do occur.

The telemedicine procedure, as documented in The Des Moines Register newspaper and television reports, illustrates other troubling elements. The first is that a physical examination never occurs by a licensed physician who is supposed to perform the abortion. The second is that the mother never sees her ultrasound, as it is privately emailed to the doctor at a different location. The third is that Dr. Tom Ross trivializes what happens at home as the "miscarriage experience". Anyone who has suffered a miscarriage will attest that it is emotional, traumatic, and can result in individuals being grief-stricken for a long time. To trivialize this is shameful.

Furthermore, Planned Parenthood of the Heartland negligently prepares the patient for what will occur at home. They never refer to the baby as a baby, so the mother is unprepared for the trauma she will experience when the remains of her baby appear in the toilet. The mother is then faced with either flushing her baby down the toilet, or collecting the remains, and being confused about what to do next.

In addition, if the mother does suffer complications at home, and makes it to the emergency room, she will need to reveal the cause of the complications to the emergency room attendants. Also, if the mother is a young girl still living at home with her parents, and wanted to keep her pregnancy private, her complications will cause her to reveal that she went to Planned Parenthood for an abortion.

Therefore, we the undersigned organizations respectfully but strongly urge you to conclude that the usage of telemedicine for the purpose of promoting the killing of unborn children is in violation of existing standards and must be prohibited without delay. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Maggie DeWitte, Executive Director  
Iowans for Life

Jenifer Bowen, Executive Director  
Iowa Right to Life

Steven N. Brody, Executive Director  
Dubuque County Right to Life, Inc.

Steve Scheffler, President  
Iowa Christian Alliance

Chuck Hurley, President  
Iowa Family Policy Center

Steve Tatz, President  
Iowans for Life

Jenny Condon, Executive Director  
Illumination Media, Des Moines

Marilyn Sharp, Board President  
Gabriel Project, Des Moines

Mary Gansen  
Four Seasons for Life, Fredericksburg

Samuel Kramer  
Tri-County Citizens for Life, Elma

Mary Eileen Devine Meyer  
Northeast Iowans for Life, Decorah

Board of Directors  
Coalition for Life of Iowa,  
Cedar Rapids

Mike Laake, State Deputy  
Knights of Columbus, Iowa

Janette Clausen, Director  
Lutheran Family Service of Iowa

Dave Prenger, President  
Carroll Area Iowans for Life, Carroll

Renee and Kerry McGuire  
Couple to Couple League, D. Moines

Garland Dahlke, President  
Sanctity of Human Life Committee  
St. Cecilia Catholic Church, Ames

Margie Augustine, Chair  
Respect Life Group  
Christ the King Church, Des Moines

Carla Butler and Carol Remer, Coordinators  
Siouxland Life Chain, Sioux City

Elizabeth McGehe, ARNP, FNP-C  
Natural Family Planning Center of Iowa  
BOMA-USA, Iowa Affiliate

Paula Templemeyer, Moderator  
Respect Life Group  
St. Edmond High School, Fort Dodge

Chris Lang and Bob Bartusek, Chairs  
Pro-Life Committee  
Holy Trinity Cath. Church, Des Moines

Paul and Tricia Pietig, President Couple  
Couple to Couple League, Des Moines

Sue Martinek, Chairperson  
Pro-Life With Love, Cedar Rapids

Father Michael Peters  
Abort Abortion

Judeth Albert  
Johnson County Right to Life

Bound4 Life, Ankeny Chapter

Randy and Sharon Horn  
Heart of Iowa Pro-Life, Oskaloosa

Tamara Scott, State Director  
Concerned Women for America of Iowa

Steven Ertelt, Editor  
Joseph Brinck, President  
LifeNews.com

Carol Everett, Founder and CEO  
The Heidi Group, Texas

Buddy Smith, Executive Vice President  
American Family Association

Msgr. Frank Bognanno, Pastor  
Christ the King Church, Des Moines

Judy Liston, Chairperson  
Respect Life Ministry  
St. Anthony Church, Des Moines

Jan Young, Pro-Life Chair  
Pro-Life Committee  
St. Boniface Cath. Church, Waukee

Carolyn Smith, President  
Des Moines Diocesan Council of  
Catholic Women

Hugh O'Hagan, Grand Knight  
Knights of Columbus Council #644

Valerie J. Owens, Executive Director  
Healthy Connections, Inc., Winterset

Phil Turnis, Co-Chair  
Delaware County Right to Life

North Lee County Right to Life

Pella Pro-Life

Wendy Wright, President  
Concerned Women for America

Sanctity of Life Foundation

Day Gardner, President  
National Black Pro-Life Union

David Bereit, National Director  
40 Days for Life, Washington DC

Kelsey Hazzard, President  
SecularProLife.org, Virginia

Father Frank Pavone  
National Director, Priests for Life  
President, National Pro-Life Religious Council

Eric Scheidler, Executive Director  
Pro-Life Action League, Illinois

Troy Newman, President  
Operation Rescue, Kansas

Peggy Hartshorn, President  
Heartbeat International, Ohio

Tom Minnery, Sr. Vice President  
Government and Public Policy  
Focus on the Family, Colorado

Judie Brown, President  
American Life League, Virginia

David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)  
CEO, Christian Medical Association  
(several hundred members in Iowa)

Ms. Jo Tolck, Executive Director  
Human Life Alliance, Minnesota

Cheryl Sullenger, Sr. Policy Advisor  
Operation Rescue, Kansas

Peggy Hamill, State Director  
Pro-Life Wisconsin

William Saunders  
Sr. Vice President and Sr. Counsel  
Americans United for Life, D.C.