

HOUSE SELECT PANEL ESTABLISHED TO INVESTIGATE ABORTION PROVIDERS IS TREADING ON DANGEROUS GROUND

*"By promoting the agenda of the discredited Center for Medical Progress (CMP) smear campaign against abortion providers the Select Panel is fostering a hostile and dangerous environment, which emboldens those who target, harass, and terrorize abortion providers."
-Eleanor Smeal*

Consider the Facts:

The Select Investigative Panel was originally established by then House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) as a direct response to the Center for Medical Progress (CMP) videos, which have since been [discredited](#) and the video's producer and co-worker have been [indicted](#).

On February 5, 2016, U.S. District Judge William Orrick in San Francisco issued an injunction to keep more than 500 hours of Daleiden's unreleased footage sealed, [saying that](#) the videos that had been made public so far "have not been pieces of journalistic integrity, but misleading edited videos and unfounded assertions...of criminal misconduct."

On October 23, 2015, then House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) announced the formation of the Panel to be led by Republican Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN). [In his announcement](#), Speaker Boehner tacitly admits that previous committees had failed to find any evidence that Planned Parenthood had broken any laws. His announcement also made no attempt to veil that this panel was created in reaction to the videos:

"Recent videos exposing the abortion-for-baby parts business have shocked the nation, and demanded action. At my request, three House committees have been investigating the abortion business, but we still don't have the full truth. Chairman Blackburn and our members will have the resources and the subpoena power to get to the bottom of these horrific practices, and build on our work to protect the sanctity of all human life."

Some Republican members of the House of Representatives have worked, from the beginning, to magnify CMP's campaign to smear Planned Parenthood.

David Daleiden, the indicted Director of CMP, reportedly sent a memo to supporters stating that [his goal](#) was to create "political pressure" on Planned Parenthood through "Congressional hearings/investigation and political consequences," including new laws to restrict abortion. Republicans inadvertently [revealed that they had been briefed](#) on the CMP videos weeks before they were first made public. When challenged, a member of the House Pro-Life Caucus told a reporter: "This interview never happened."

Although the claims in the videos have been debunked, members of the Select Panel and some majority witnesses continue to refer to the videos as if they are valid.

Efforts to investigate allegations made by the CMP videos haven't led to any evidence of wrongdoing by Planned Parenthood—yet the witch hunt continues without legitimate public or policy interest.

Last year, the House and Senate [directed four other](#) congressional committees—three in the House and one in the Senate—to investigate CMP’s claims against Planned Parenthood. None have found any evidence of wrongdoing by this healthcare provider.

In addition, Planned Parenthood has been investigated and cleared of wrongdoing by officials in [12 states](#) including Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas and Washington. Eight other states declined to investigate citing a lack of any evidence, including California, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, New Hampshire and Virginia.

The House Select Investigative Panel was initially allocated a taxpayer-funded budget of \$300,000 through January 2, 2016 and it continues to waste taxpayer money.

As the House Select Investigative Panel continues its baseless investigation, going so far as to [target and subpoena abortion providers and researchers](#), there has been a sharp increase in anti-abortion extremism and violence.

The National Abortion Federation [recently announced](#) a significant increase in threats and violence directed at U.S. abortion clinics in 2015, attributing the surge to the release of undercover videos intended to discredit Planned Parenthood. According to the NAF, abortion providers reported 94 death threats to NAF in 2015. This is a dramatic increase from the 6 death threats reported to the Feminist Majority Foundation in the first half of 2014.

Just in November, an anti-abortion extremist Robert Dear, open fired at a Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood, killing three people—including a police officer—and wounding nine others. Upon his arrest, Dear told officers “no more baby parts,” echoing rhetoric that was introduced by the CMP videos and that continues to be [used by Rep. Blackburn](#) and other members of the Select Panel.

Court documents surrounding the arrest of Dear, show that Dear [told police](#) he attacked the Colorado Springs clinic because he was upset over the “selling of baby parts.” He also stated that he admired another anti-abortion extremist, Paul Hill, who murdered Dr. John Bayard Britton and a volunteer clinic escort, Lt. Col. James Barrett in Pensacola, Florida in 1994, and that he had previously engaged in activities meant to close abortion clinics, including gluing the locks at a clinic when he lived in South Carolina. This tactic was previously used by Scott Roeder, the convicted murderer of Dr. George Tiller.

The importance of these links are underscored by two court hearings this week related to anti-abortion violence: 1) the mental competency hearing of CO Planned Parenthood shooting suspect Robert Dear Jr. and 2) a hearing in preparation for the resentencing of Dr. George Tiller’s convicted killer Scott Roeder.

The Select Investigative Panel has, so far, refused to call CMP director David Daleiden or any CMP officials, such as founding officer and president of Operation Rescue Troy Newman, to testify under oath about their CMP activities, including the creation of these deceptively-edited videos.

- Earlier this year, a Houston, Texas grand jury—convened by an anti-choice, Republican prosecutor—indicted CMP head David Daleiden and a CMP employee on felony charges related to their CMP activities.
- California Attorney General Kamala Harris is [investigating](#) CMP, David Daleiden, and the fake company, called Biomax Procurement Services, created to carry out their deception. Earlier this month investigators from Harris’ office searched Daleiden’s apartment and seized computers, hard drives, and California drivers licenses issued under aliases that Daleiden and an associate used to gain access to and surreptitiously film doctors and other abortion providers.
- Troy Newman, a founding official of CMP and the President of Operation Rescue, has [long targeted and harassed abortion providers](#), including Dr. George Tiller who was murdered by Scott Roeder in 2009. Newman led a 7-year campaign against Dr. Tiller. After Dr. Tiller’s murder, Newman deployed “missionaries” to harass abortion providers at Southwestern Women’s Options, which was recently [subpoenaed](#) by Rep. Marsha Blackburn, the chair of the House Select Panel.
- Last week, corporate litigator Fay Clayton [testified](#) before the House Select Panel about the anti-abortion group Life Dynamics who carried out a similar ‘undercover’ campaign against abortion providers and tissue donation organizations in 2000. Life Dynamics’ ‘sting’ operation – and subsequent Congressional investigation - unraveled when their star witness admitted to making false statements under oath and to receiving money from Life Dynamics for the deception. Mark Crutcher, the head of Life Dynamics who orchestrated its sham videos, also advised the CMP video project. Clayton concluded her testimony stating, “The Select Panel’s failure to subpoena the accusers here, or their failure to attend voluntarily, sends a message...Unless this Select Panel is willing to put Mr. Daleiden and his associates under oath and get to the bottom of what *they* did, it should terminate these proceedings now and return to doing the people’s business.”