
Arkansas Blog

Planned Parenthood finds doctor willing to help clinic meet law on physician referral

by [Max Brantley](#)

November 05, 2018

8 comments

Documents filed today in federal court indicate **Planned Parenthood** has finally been able to find a **physician with hospital admitting privileges** willing to contract with Planned Parenthood as a point of referral to comply with a state law aimed at putting the clinic out of business.



For three years, Planned Parenthood of Arkansas and Eastern Oklahoma has been unable to find a physician to serve clinics in Little Rock and Fayetteville because of doctors' fear of reprisals from anti-abortion groups. It had obtained an injunction from **federal Judge Kristine Baker** to stop enforcement of the law because it said it would put the clinic out of the abortion business — and impose unreasonable hardships on women who seek drug abortions from the clinics, supplied in the first 10 weeks of pregnancy. Complications are rare and medical evidence shows little need for an admitting doctor in addition to available medical referrals, but the state has continued to press to put the clinics out of business. Similar laws have been blocked in other states because of the undue burden they place on women.

A Planned Parenthood court filing Oct. 31 detailed the difficulty Planned Parenthood has had and some discussions it has had with a willing doctor — whose name is redacted from the record. **Dr. Stephanie Ho**, Planned Parenthood's medical director, [wrote about the obstacles created by the state](#) for the *Times* earlier in October.

The op-ed ended by imploring physicians in the state to contact PPAEO to help it comply

with the requirement. Said the court filing ([which you can read in full here](#)):

“ PPAEO staff also continued to reach out to physicians who had initially expressed some interest in helping PPAEO comply with the contracted physician requirement. Margaret Kenny, PPAEO’s Fayetteville health center manager, had previously identified a physician, Dr. XXXXXXXX, who had recently started working in Arkansas and therefore may not have received PPAEO’s previous letters addressed to physicians regarding the contracted physician requirement.

Ms. Kenny called Dr. XXXXXXXX’s office to discuss the requirement, and subsequently mailed PPAEO’s most recent letter to her attention. Dr. XXXXXX emailed PPAEO on September 29 and said she would be interested in learning more about a possible arrangement, although she was not sure whether an agreement would be possible in light of her hospital contract. PPAEO contacted her multiple times in October to set up a time to discuss the contracted physician requirement, and will continue working to arrange a phone conversation.

Additionally, Ms. Wales, continued to reach out to Dr. XXXXXX. While Dr. XXXXX had previously expressed some interest in the contracted physician position, he stated that he needed to check with his hospital’s administration prior to moving forward with conversations.

Ms. Wales continues to be in touch with Dr. XXXXXX regarding the requirement.

On Nov. 1, a document was filed under seal in the case. This may refer to a contract with a cooperating physician, because today, Planned Parenthood and the state joined in a motion to lift the injunction and end the appeal because "Appellees have now found a physician who is willing to serve as Appellees’ contracted physician as required by Section 1504(d) of the Act and executed a contract with that physician. Appellees are therefore currently in compliance with the contracted physician requirement."

Attorney General Leslie Rutledge later issued a news release that described the development this way:

Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge filed a motion in the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit to vacate a federal district court's order preliminarily enjoining Arkansas's contract-physician requirement. The State's motion followed Planned Parenthood's announcement that they will comply with the state's contract-physician requirement after claiming for three years they could not comply with it.

"The removal of the preliminary injunction will allow Arkansas law to take effect, ensuring that women have access to reliable emergency healthcare following complications associated with medication abortions," said Attorney General Rutledge. "After challenging this requirement for three years and claiming it could not comply, Planned Parenthood has finally agreed to follow this common sense law. Protecting women's health and the unborn is an important Arkansas value that I will defend for all Arkansans."

It was no thanks to the state and threatening anti-abortion activists that a physician was found. The need to keep the name secret tells you plenty about that. Rutledge's release omitted the joint participation by Planned Parenthood in the motion. Rutledge also omitted any reference to the testimony about difficulty finding a physician. Rutledge also again claimed a health interest of women despite abundant testimony that this requirement only raised an impediment to health care, not an addition. The truth isn't in her on this issue. She has no interest in the health of women. She has an interest only in making abortion unavailable in Arkansas, no matter how desperate the health need of a woman seeking one.

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DEATHBYINCHES

11/05/2018 AT 5:49 PM

7
LIKES

0
DISLIKES

Hooray for Dr. XXXXXX!!! Thank you for stepping up!

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE



TSALLENARNG

11/05/2018 AT 6:47 PM

2
LIKES

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DISLIKES

Leslie managed to screw a lot of Arkansas citizens on her way to cementing her hate-filled xian cred in order to seek higher office.

No doubt she is happy with herself.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE



GOING FOR THE RECORD

11/05/2018 AT 6:47 PM

1
LIKES

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DISLIKES

Perhaps looney tunes Leslie can be joined by the 24 other states attorneys General to contest the current law that allowed the PP to acquire a contract Doctor. This must have been a gross oversight by the repubthugs legislators. Leslie can bring her AG contingent from Texas after they get ACA declared Void and unconstitutional and eliminate millions from health insurance. Give The new Doctor a great big ATTAGIRL.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

**PLAINJIM**

11/05/2018 AT 8:08 PM

6

LIKES

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DISLIKES

Thanks for that doctor who has the guts to put himself on the front line. He's much like the late Dr. William Harrison of Fayetteville, who at one time had the only abortion clinic in Northwest Arkansas, and whose clinic was picketed every day, and who was vilified and threatened beyond belief.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

**PLAINJIM**

11/05/2018 AT 8:11 PM

4

LIKES

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DISLIKES

P.S. His clinic was also firebombed at one time. So much for the so-called pro-life crowd, who would risk taking lives, and often did, in furtherance of their cause.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

**VANESSA**

11/05/2018 AT 8:54 PM

3

LIKES

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DISLIKES

After reading plainjim's comment I went back and re-read the quoted op-ed. Part of me is disappointed that that the doctor is identified as male. Simply because that's a clue about identification. It's sad that doctors have to worry about being identified. It's not because of atheism, either.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

**TSALLENARNG**

11/06/2018 AT 7:00 AM

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LIKES

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DISLIKES

The sealed record & anonymity of the doctor, lest that person have their home burned, workplace bombed or them self be assassinated by domestic terrorist "pro-lifers" speaks VOLUMES about the extremist anti-choice movement.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

**PERPLEXED**

11/06/2018 AT 8:29 AM

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LIKES

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DISLIKES

The skeptic in me says that it's only a matter of time until someone leaks this courageous doctor's name.

REPORT



LIKE



DISLIKE

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