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Indiana, Kentucky Planned Parenthood seeing alliance boost

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INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky is receiving a nearly \$1 million funding boost and is adding staffers since its merger with the group's Seattle-based affiliate earlier this year.

Additional money was promised with [the merger announced in February](#) as the wealthier chapter for Washington, Idaho, Hawaii and Alaska looked to help in states facing tougher anti-abortion laws. The Indiana and Kentucky group's tax filings show deficits of nearly \$1.3 million in 2017 and \$1.7 million in 2016 despite closing several clinics in recent years, the [Indianapolis Business Journal](#) reported.

The organization has been able to increase salaries for its Indiana and Kentucky jobs while adding 45 positions this year, said Chris Charbonneau, who was CEO of the Seattle-based chapter when the merger was announced and is now also leading the Indianapolis-based affiliate.

"We can help women that Mike Pence hurt," Charbonneau said, referring to the former Indiana governor who is now vice president. "That's hugely attractive to people who feel like they are undoing damage."

Republican-controlled legislatures in Indiana and Kentucky have adopted numerous anti-abortion laws in recent years. Planned Parenthood, whose Indiana and Kentucky affiliates merged in 2013, provides abortions at four of its 15 Indiana clinics, but not at its two Kentucky clinics.

[Kentucky officials this month urged](#) federal appeals judges to restore a state law that threatened to close the state's only abortion clinic in Louisville. A federal judge in June [blocked an Indiana law](#) that would have banned a second-trimester abortion procedure, just weeks after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a portion of a 2016 law signed by Pence requiring [burial or cremation of fetal remains](#) after an abortion.

Mike Fichter, president and CEO of the anti-abortion group Indiana Right to Life, criticized the effort to seek an "influx of cash from Planned Parenthood donors from the Pacific Northwest."

"We believe it is clear Indiana is now a test market for Planned Parenthood's national plan to expand abortion access," Fichter said.

Charbonneau said the Pacific Northwest affiliate is allocating \$900,000 toward Indiana and Kentucky and is looking to add clinics in those states, but hasn't decided how many or where. She said she hopes the increased presence will lead to more donor support, with a goal of having the Indiana and Kentucky operations become sustainable without funding from Seattle.

"I think people get more and more excited as services get beefed up and they see a real impact on their community," Charbonneau said.

The alliance certainly makes more funding available for the Indiana and Kentucky group. It had 2017 revenue of \$17.1 million — about one-fourth of the \$72.9 million for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaiian Islands, according to tax filings.

"What's absolutely true now is, Indiana and Kentucky can be confident that the existence will continue

and that the bottom-line needs will be met," said Betty Cockrum, who led [Indiana's Planned Parenthood group for 15 years](#) before retiring in 2017. "That's huge and a great comfort."

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