



RCRC Statement on Dr. Willie Parker's Resignation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DR. WILLIE PARKER RESIGNS FROM RCRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This statement can be attributed to RCRC Board Chair, Rev. Linda Jaramillo

The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice today issued the following statement in reference to sexual misconduct allegations against Dr. Willie Parker, vice chair of the board.

“As a faith-based organization, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice takes seriously our commitment to ensure reproductive health, rights, and justice for all women, and particularly those on the margins of society — women of color, women living in poverty, and women seeking compassionate counsel during deeply personal life decisions.

“In everything that we do as religious leaders and people of faith, we strive to live into our shared values of prophetic witness, pastoral presence, compassion, accountability and justice. That is why the RCRC Board of Directors has accepted the resignation of our vice chair, Dr. Willie Parker, due to allegations of sexual misconduct.

“For decades, we have stated that we trust women, and that we wanted to create space for them to speak their truth and make their own choices. It

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would be contradictory to our mission to espouse these values publicly without privately holding ourselves, and persons in our organization, to the highest ethical standards.

“We are obviously heartbroken over this situation. We empathize with all victims of sexual misconduct. Additionally, Dr. Willie Parker is a noted abortion provider and leader in the movement for reproductive justice. He is also an African American man providing services in the south, a region where abortion access is incredibly limited. His commitment to reproductive justice has continued in spite of the risks and threats that abortion providers and people of color face every day.

“In the south, there were already serious concerns about abortion access prior to the allegations against Dr. Parker, and we continue to worry about the ramifications for women seeking care in light of this situation.

“As people of faith, we understand that part of our job is to offer context in difficult times. We recognize the barriers Dr. Parker has overcome as an abortion provider, an advocate and a person of color. At the same time, we must hold ourselves accountable. We are aware that the reproductive health, rights, and justice movement must be above reproach.

“We will use this experience as a launchpad for rethinking strategies to center women’s voices and women’s leadership even as we celebrate the contributions of allies from all walks of life.”

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