



## NEWS

# Michigan officials refuse to investigate botched abortion at Planned Parenthood: Pro-life activist

*The Kalamazoo Health Center did not report an abortion that sent a woman to the emergency room last April, and the state is doing nothing to hold the abortionist accountable, according to a local woman.*

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*By Dustin Siggins*

KALAMAZOO, MI, April 30, 2014 (LifeSiteNews.com) -- A pro-life advocate and nurse had no idea that a trip to pick up her granddaughter would turn into a year-long fight for life against a negligent state bureaucracy.

Last April 19, Ann Norton was driving by the Kalamazoo Health Center, an affiliate of Planned Parenthood. As she did so, an ambulance pulled into the Center.

"I knew it was abortion day at the clinic," Norton told LifeSiteNews. She then parked near the clinic, and followed the ambulance and a car to nearby Bronson Hospital. It turned out that the car was driven by the boyfriend of the woman in the hospital, Norton said.



"I spoke with the boyfriend, and told him that I'm a nurse advocate and wanted to help," Norton said. "We walked into the hospital room together, where I was told by the young woman that she was there as the result of an abortion complication." Norton says there was profuse bleeding.

What happened next, according to Norton, violated state law.

Michigan Compiled Law (MCL) 333.2837 requires that "a physician shall file a written report with the department regarding each patient who comes under the physician's professional care and who suffers a physical complication or death that is a primary, secondary, or tertiary result of an abortion."

Both the physician at the Planned Parenthood clinic and the physician who took care of the alleged victim at Bronson are required to fill out the form. Those physicians, according to Norton, were clinic doctor Virgil Reid and Bronson physician Dr. Steve Larson.

Norton says this was not done. According to documents Norton sent to LifeSiteNews, she filed her first complaint with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs on May 6, 2013. Three days later, her complaint received a response and a notification it would be taken under consideration.

On October 18, the same person who contacted Norton previously informed her "that under the Public Health Code [MCL 333.16231(2)], we can only conduct an investigation if so authorized by the board chairperson or his/her designee."

"Your allegation was reviewed by a member of the appropriate board who determined that there was insufficient basis to authorize investigation of your allegation. Since no investigation was authorized, we have no choice but to close your file with no further action taken as we do not have the authority to override a decision of the board," Norton was told.

In February 2014, Norton had numerous conversations with a Freedom of Information Act officer in the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. Norton said that person, Melvin Farmer, told her in February that no paperwork had been filed on the incident by either doctor in his department or the Department of Community Health.

In a phone conversation with LifeSiteNews, Farmer clarified that a medical board is convened if complaints like Norton's are made. If they are found to have no merit, the complaint is not made public. This is done to protect the privacy of physicians and patients alike.

LifeSiteNews was unable to contact the alleged victim, as Norton said she had been threatened with legal action if she gave out the woman's contact information. Norton also asked for the alleged victim's name to be kept out of the public eye because of concern about the stress of being post-abortive.

According to Bronson spokesperson Erin Smith, HIPAA regulations prevent the hospital from releasing information about the alleged victim or Larson. She also declined to answer questions about the medical board's investigation, telling LifeSiteNews that "hospitals are not able to look up or share any individual's personal health information without their permission; so we can't speak to the specifics of this inquiry."

Smith did tell LifeSiteNews "that Bronson Methodist Hospital follows Michigan law (MCL 333.2837, as amended March 31, 2013). Any patient presenting to Bronson seeking care for complications following an abortion will be evaluated and treated for their medical condition. Upon determining that treatment was related to a physical complication after an abortion, Bronson has a policy in place to notify the provider to complete the required Michigan Department of Community Health form."

The full extent of women being harmed, or killed, by "safe, legal" abortion in Michigan is not known. A report from the Michigan Department of Community Health found that fewer than one-tenth of one percent (.08 percent) of women experience abortion complications – but pro-life advocates say that tiny number is due to unreported injuries.

"The law has been in place for over a decade, but isn't being followed," Michigan Right to Life (MRTL) Legislative Director Ed Rivet told LifeSiteNews. The state's official number "cannot be legitimate," he says, because "no medical procedure of any kind can have a complication rate of 8/100 of one percent."

"The most indefensible part of this is when we know women have died from an abortion, with full publicity in the mainstream media, and yet the official data for that year show no deaths from abortions. These women die at the hands of an abortionist and are not even given the dignity of becoming a statistic," Rivet said.

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To combat statewide underreporting of abortion injuries, the "Citizens Accountability Act" was introduced by State Senator Rick Jones and five colleagues on March 4. The bill, which is in the Committee on Health Policy, was developed by Right to Life of Michigan "to address a serious under-reporting of injuries caused by abortion in our state," Rivet said.

Rivet told LifeSiteNews that the Act "was designed to empower ordinary citizens like Ann to file a 'Notice of Compliance' with the state, the abortionist, and the facility or provider who treated the injury, informing them that this report is required by law. It's a simple concept of accountability - 'We know this injury happened and you have to report it.'"

To protect against frivolous claims, the legislation has "a provision that would penalize anyone filing a false or frivolous claim," explained Rivet. "We really doubt this would happen – there are enough real cases to report. No one needs to invent fictitious cases."

A spokesperson for Planned Parenthood declined to comment, citing a practice of not giving out patient information.

The Guttmacher Institute, formerly a research arm of Planned Parenthood, reports that there were 29,190 abortion in Michigan in 2011.

Norton has since re-filed her complaint, as of March 24.

