

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

DISTRICT OFFICES:  
51 MONROE STREET, #507  
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850  
(301) 424-3501  
  
205 CENTER STREET  
SUITE 206  
MOUNT AIRY, MD 21771  
(301) 829-2171

[www.vanhollen.house.gov](http://www.vanhollen.house.gov)

October 5, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Speaker,

We are very concerned about the hearing that House Republicans conducted in the Oversight and Government Reform Committee involving Planned Parenthood on September 29, 2015. Notwithstanding the absence of any wrongdoing, its President, Ms. Cecile Richards was cross-examined and accosted with personal questions and accusations for 4 ½ hours while constantly being interrupted. This hearing was not “oversight” it was a witch hunt against her personally and an ideological attack on a critical provider of women’s health care.

It became apparent that the Republicans’ intentions were not to investigate Planned Parenthood’s receipt of federal dollars when shortly after her opening remarks Ms. Richards was questioned about her compensation which had no relevance to the hearing. Never before has a witness had her salary attacked, not even when the Committee has questioned the CEOs of companies that have actually been found guilty of breaking Federal law.

We sincerely believe that the Committee should extend an apology to Ms. Richards and refrain from such ideologically based personal attacks of its witnesses in the future particularly because there was no basis to the allegations from the outset.

In fact, Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Jason Chaffetz, who conducted the hearing, admitted that he had identified no evidence that Planned Parenthood has violated any laws during a recent appearance on CNN’s *Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer*.

On October 1st, the Pulitzer Prize winning PolitiFact News Service awarded Chairman Chaffetz, a rating of “Pants on Fire” for springing a highly misleading chart on Planned Parenthood head Cecile Richards during her testimony at the recent hearing. The chart falsely suggested that Planned Parenthood performs more abortions than cancer screenings and prevention services.

PolitiFact found that Chaffetz’s chart “suggests a conclusion that’s flat wrong.” It cited numerous experts who concluded that his chart is “a damn lie,” “ethically wrong,” “purposeful

deception,” “scandalous,” “propagandized,” “an egregious example of using a chart to mislead,” and “absolutely misleading, and intentionally so.”

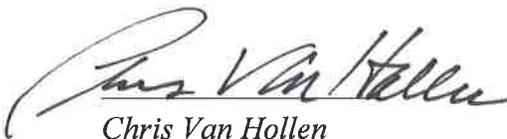
Republican attempts to defund Planned Parenthood are clearly political and greatly misguided. The majority of Americans recognize that Planned Parenthood is an organization that plays a vital role in providing health care to women across the country. One in five women will use Planned Parenthood for primary and preventative care in their lifetime, and in 103 counties with Planned Parenthood centers, Planned Parenthood is the sole provider of these services. Republicans would eliminate the ability for those women across the country to get basic preventative care that over a lifetime can be life-saving.

After a two month investigation, conducted by three different House Committees, considering tens of thousands of pages of documents and multiple hearings, there is no evidence to substantiate Republican claims of illegal activity by Planned Parenthood.

Planned Parenthood has been the victim of an entrapment scheme conducted over three years in which an opposing political organization actively lied and used deceptive tactics against Planned Parenthood’s employees. Clearly Planned Parenthood, and its President, was the subject of a hostile hearing in the absence of evidence of any wrongdoing.

We sincerely hope that you direct the Chairs of House Committees to refrain from conducting this type of hearing in the future and to abandon any thoughts of establishing a Subcommittee to pursue these allegations that the Chairman of the Oversight Committee admitted have not been substantiated.

Sincerely,



*Chris Van Hollen*  
Member of Congress



*Rosa DeLauro*  
Member of Congress



*Louise Slaughter*  
Member of Congress