

Minnesota Success: Defunding Anti-Abortion Centers

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Minnesota History of Anti-Abortion Center Funding

Period of Funding : **2005 - 2023** Estimated Funding Over Time*: **\$48,493,000**

Anti-abortion centers (AACs), sometimes referred to as “crisis pregnancy centers,” are established, backed, and funded by the anti-abortion movement in order to push their agenda in our communities. AACs exist for the primary purpose of delaying and deterring people from accessing abortion care. AACs attract clients by advertising free services. They offer some material goods and financial support, which are a sliver of what parents truly need. To receive them, people are required to sit through mandated and biased counseling.

Many states fund anti-abortion centers with public dollars but in recent years, due to increased scrutiny and advocacy, some have begun to take action to hold AACs accountable for their deliberate deception and misinformation. This is leading some states to end the practice of funneling tax dollars to AACs.

Ending Funding: How Advocates In Minnesota Stopped Tax Dollars From Flowing To Anti-Abortion Centers

In 2023, Minnesota ended that state’s Alternatives to Abortion program, which for nearly two decades had funneled money to anti-abortion centers.

The state’s health and human services budget for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 eliminated “Positive Alternatives”, a program established in 2005 through which the Minnesota Department of Health annually awarded \$3.4 million to anti-abortion organizations, including AACs. Under Minnesota law, program grant recipients were explicitly prohibited from counseling clients on abortion or referring them to organizations that provide abortions.

Reallocation: How Minnesota Is Directing Funding To Support Pregnant People and Parents

Funding AACs siphons money away from low-income individuals and those in need of quality health care, and instead places it in the hands of organizations that spread biased, false, and harmful information. Instead of funneling money to programs that spend more on propaganda than services, states can fund people getting health care, accurate information, and access to all of their options, including abortion, adoption, and meaningful support for parents to raise children once they are born.

The Minnesota budget reallocates this money from the former “Positive Alternatives” program and increases it to more than \$7 million each year for the “Health Beginnings, Healthy Families” initiative, which only supports nonprofits that provide real services and activities that are proven through sound data and reporting to improve infant and maternal outcomes. Unfortunately, Minnesota did not eliminate all funding to anti-abortion centers in 2023. The budget continues to fund one AAC, Cradle of Hope, with \$100,000 in non-recurring general funds.

***Equity Forward estimated AAC funding using appropriated figures from state budget documents. Equity Forward is engaged in ongoing research to determine variations between appropriated and actual funding used.**

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