

Pennsylvania Success: Defunding Anti-Abortion Centers

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Pennsylvania History of Anti-Abortion Center Funding

Period of Funding : 1990 - 2023

Estimated Funding Over Time*: \$210,958,444

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: Advocates Stopped Tax Dollars From Flowing to Anti-Abortion Centers

In August 2023, Pennsylvania announced the state would stop funneling public dollars to anti-abortion centers. Equity Forward worked alongside advocacy groups Women’s Law Project and Planned Parenthood Pennsylvania Advocates to achieve this success.

Effective January 1, 2024, Pennsylvania ended its contract with Real Alternatives, the entity that managed the state’s Alternatives to Abortion (A2A) program for nearly 30 years. The move came after years of investigations and complaints by advocacy groups and elected officials into the group for peddling misinformation on abortion care and misusing program dollars. This included a multi-year-long lawsuit by Equity Forward that sought more transparency into the program.

Pennsylvania began funding AACs in 1990. It was the first state to establish a state-funded A2A program and to funnel federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) dollars to AACs. Real Alternative’s program served as a template for A2A programs in many other states.

Reallocation: Pennsylvania Redirected 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

When Real Alternative’s contract was ended, the PA Department of Human Services committed to reallocating AAC funding to “women’s service programs that will aim to broaden health care access, amplify awareness, and cultivate well-informed decision-making with a particular focus on women, pregnant women, and new mothers.” In January 2024, Adagio Health, Family Health Council of Central Pennsylvania, Maternal & Family Health Services, and Maternity Care Coalition were announced as recipients.


*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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