

November 25, 2015

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Lynch,

We, the undersigned, urge the Department of Justice to investigate the recent attacks on reproductive-health clinics using all appropriate federal statutes, including domestic terrorism. Since the release of the first deceptively edited video from the Center for Medical Progress (CMP) intended to vilify Planned Parenthood, and, by proxy, all abortion providers, anti-choice extremists have launched an unprecedented and multi-pronged assault against women's reproductive rights.

As you know, beginning in July when the first video was released and continuing through recent weeks, there have been multiple arson attacks and an outrageous number of threats against abortion providers. It's clear that anti-choice extremists are using these videos as an excuse to commit violent attacks against trusted women's health clinics. When hate rhetoric and threats incite violence, those responsible for committing violence need to be investigated for their acts of domestic terrorism.

These appalling acts of violence are a predictable ripple effect from the deliberate and calculated smear campaign orchestrated by the anti-choice CMP, which has fueled violence by extremists. Since the first video was released, there have been three arson attacks at Planned Parenthood clinics across the country: New Orleans, Louisiana; Pullman, Washington; and Aurora, Illinois. Just last month, a clinic in Claremont, New Hampshire was attacked. Someone broke in and used a hatchet to destroy equipment and exam rooms and break water and sewer lines, flooding the entire clinic. These are only some of the attacks perpetrated against abortion providers. In fact, independent providers, alongside Planned Parenthood clinics, have reported an increase in violent threats to clinics and staff; the seriousness of the threats has even resulted in the need for protective custody.

These recent attacks on clinics are part of a long history of ideologically driven clinic violence. Anti-choice individuals and organizations who target abortion providers seek to end reproductive freedom by any means necessary. Since 1993, eight clinic workers—including four doctors, two clinic employees, a clinic escort, and a security guard—have been murdered in the United States. Seventeen attempted murders have also occurred since 1991. Between 1977 and 2014, at least 42 bombings, 182 arsons, 99 attempted bombings and arsons and 662 bomb threats have been carried out against abortion providers.

We acknowledge and appreciate the long-standing work of the DOJ to investigate and bring an end to clinic violence. To further that goal, we call on the Department of Justice to investigate these attacks under all applicable federal law. These crimes are acts of domestic terrorism under Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 2331, which defines domestic terrorism as dangerous acts "intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population" and "to influence policy of a government by intimidation or coercion." These attacks should also continue to be investigated under the FACE Act, 18 USC Section 248, the federal stalking statute, 18 USC Section 2261A(1), and RICO.

These despicable attacks on trusted women's health-care providers are not just acts of hatred and violence but acts of domestic terrorism—and we urge the DOJ to treat them as such.

Signed,

NARAL Pro-Choice America

Abortion Conversation Project

American Federation of Teachers

Atlanta Women's Center

Cedar River Clinics

Center for Health and Gender Equity
(CHANGE)

Center for Inquiry

Center for Women Policy Studies

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers

Cherry Hill Women's Center

CHOICES – Memphis Center for Reproductive
Health

Courage Campaign

CREDO Action

D.C. Doulas for Choice

Delaware County Women's Center

Disciples for Choice

Disciples Justice Action Network (DJAN)

Falls Church Health Care

Friends of the Earth
Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance (GLAA)
Gay and Lesbian Advocates & Defenders
(GLAD)

Gynuity Health Projects

Hartford Women's GYN Center

Healthy and Free Tennessee

Ibis Reproductive Health

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's
Reproductive Justice Agenda

Institute for Science and Human Values

Ipas

Jewish Women International

Legal Momentum

Marriage Equality USA

Medical Students for Choice

Methodist Federation for Social Action

Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice
Network (MUUSJN) Interfaith Reproductive
Justice Coalition

National Asian Pacific American Women's
Forum (NAPAWF)

National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR)

National Institute for Reproductive Health

National Organization for Women (NOW)
National Women's Health Network (NWHN)

Northeast Ohio Women's Clinic

Philadelphia Women's Center

People For the American Way (PFAW)

Population Connection Action Fund

Population Institute (PI)

Positive Women's Network USA (PWN-USA)

Presbyterian Feminist Agenda Network

Pro-Choice Resources (PCR)

Religious Institute

Sea Change Program

Secular Policy Institute

SisterReach

The Advocacy Committee for Women's
Concerns (Presbyterian Church USA)

UltraViolet

Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
(UUWF)

Voice of Choice

West Virginia Focus: Reproductive Education &
Equality (WV FREE)

Western Methodist Justice Movement

Whole Woman's Health

Women's Equality Center (WEC)

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