

June 21, 2016

## **Planned Parenthood Funding and the Omnibus Vote**

In many primary elections, candidates are challenging pro-life incumbent Congressmen saying they are “not really pro-life” because the Congressmen (or Congresswomen) voted in favor of the Omnibus Appropriations bill (H.R. 2029). This is being said of some of the most stalwart defenders of life on the Hill!

Committed pro-life House members, who have 100% voting scores from National Right to Life, are being inaccurately, unfairly described as “not pro-life enough” by some critics. Some of the critics clearly have ulterior political motives, while others may merely be misinformed.

**“Neither Congressman Markwayne Mullin nor any other member of Congress did anything contrary to pro-life interests by voting in favor of the omnibus appropriations bill in December,” said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life. “The bill preserved existing pro-life laws such as the Hyde Amendment, and contrary to some claims, it contained no earmark, line item, or specific appropriation for Planned Parenthood. It is true that we need a new law to prevent Planned Parenthood from tapping into federal health programs such as Medicaid – but that effort was best advanced by approval of a separate bill, the budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 3762), which was immune from a pro-abortion filibuster. Although the reconciliation bill was vetoed, the filibuster-avoiding path blazed by H.R. 3762 can be employed to enact a block on funding to Planned Parenthood, once there is a president willing to sign it.”**

Addendum:

National Right to Life took no position on the Fiscal Year 2016 Omnibus Appropriations bill (H.R. 2029), which passed the House of Representatives on December 18, 2015, by a vote of 316-113, and which subsequently passed the Senate and was enacted into law. Whatever the other merits or demerits of that bill, no member of Congress did anything contrary to PRO-LIFE interests by voting for it. Contrary to some claims, that bill contained no earmark, line item, or specific appropriation for Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood receives most of its federal funds simply by tapping into longstanding federal programs such as Medicaid, and to prevent this would require enactment of a new law. The omnibus appropriations bill was ill-suited to serve as a vehicle for enacting such a new law, because an omnibus appropriations bill is subject to filibuster, and because it contains funding for most government programs (veterans, military, law enforcement, etc.). Instead, National Right to Life advocated enactment of a law to bar funding for Planned Parenthood as part of the budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 3762), which was not subject to filibuster. The House gave preliminary approval to this pro-life budget reconciliation bill on October 23, 2015, and it subsequently won Senate approval as well, since it was not subject to filibuster. President Obama vetoed H.R. 3762 -- just as he would have vetoed any appropriations bill or other type of bill that limited funding to Planned Parenthood -- but the filibuster-avoiding path blazed by H.R. 3762 can be employed to enact a prohibition on funding to Planned Parenthood, once there is a president in office willing to sign it.