

GAO: Abortion-promoting groups got nearly \$1 billion in federal funds

WASHINGTON – Six organizations that perform or promote abortion received at least \$967 million in federal funding in fiscal years 2002 through 2009, according to a new report from the Government Accountability Office.

The report, made public June 16, looked at government funding given to Advocates for Youth, the Guttmacher Institute, International Planned Parenthood Federation, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Population Council of the United States, and Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States.

GAO had been asked for the report by Rep. Pete Olson, R-Texas, and 30 other members of Congress, including five senators.

“With the national debt over \$13 trillion – costing every American \$118,000 – we must apply strict scrutiny to every federal dollar allocated,” said Olson at a June 16 news conference at the U.S. Capitol.

“That this tax money is spent by organizations that offend the majority of Americans (who oppose taxpayer funding of groups that promote or perform abortions) only further justifies the need for this alarming report,” he added.

The GAO report showed the following government funding:

- Advocates for Youth, \$8.7 million.
- Guttmacher Institute, \$12.7 million.
- International Planned Parenthood Federation, \$3.9 million.
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America, \$657.1 million.
- Population Council of the United States, \$284.3 million.

- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, \$300,000.

The totals for Advocates for Youth, International Planned Parenthood, and the Sexuality Information and Education Council covered the years 2002-2009, while the totals for the other three were from 2002 to 2008.

Nearly all the reported expenditures in the report (about \$942 million) were by programs administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. Agency for International Development. The remaining \$25 million came from programs administered by the U.S. departments of Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture or Justice.

USAID also shipped “contraceptive commodities” valued at \$7.6 million to affiliates of the International Planned Parenthood Federation during the time period studied, but that spending was not included in the total, the report said.

“Additionally, for federal fiscal years 2002 through 2005, complete obligation and disbursement data for awards made through USAID’s overseas-based missions were not available,” the GAO said in the report. “As a result, obligations and disbursements in this report may understate the actual amount of federal funds provided to the selected organizations and their affiliates.”

The GAO noted that during most of the time covered by the report, the Mexico City policy was in effect. It required foreign nongovernmental organizations receiving federal funds for family planning to agree that they would not actively promote or provide abortions as a method of family planning in other countries. The policy was revoked in January 2009 by President Barack Obama.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., said U.S. funding of “the abortion industry at home and abroad” has significantly increased since Obama’s election.

“When Obama shredded the Mexico City policy, he opened the floodgate of taxpayer funds to pro-abortion NGOs” such as the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Smith added at the June 16 news conference. “It is time for Americans and especially Congress to take a second look and defund” those organizations.

Earlier in the month, Smith, a Catholic who co-chairs the Congressional Pro-Life

Caucus, expressed opposition to a Senate committee's vote to overturn the longtime ban on abortions in military medical facilities.

"Our military facilities should be a place of hope and healing, not intentional destruction of innocent human life," he said. "This amendment will mean that as many as 260 military medical facilities worldwide will now be in the abortion business."

The Senate Armed Services Committee recently voted 15-12 in favor of an amendment to the annual Department of Defense authorization bill that would delete a ban on abortion in military facilities signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1996.

Smith said he did not expect the House, which has already passed the Defense bill without the amendment, to approve the change if the legislation comes back from the Senate with the amendment.