

## Ohio Budget Bill Would Defund Planned Parenthood, Rape Crisis Centers

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By Laura Bassett



**UPDATE:** The budget bill passed the Senate by a 23-10 party line vote.

The Ohio Senate will vote on a budget bill Thursday that would defund Planned Parenthood, block grants to rape crisis centers that refer women to abortion clinics, and prevent abortion clinics from transferring patients to public hospitals in the case of severe complications.

The GOP-controlled House passed a budget bill in April that defunds Planned Parenthood and redirects some of that money to crisis pregnancy centers, which are Christian-run organizations that work to dissuade women from having abortions. Republican senators have added two additional provisions to their version of the budget to make it more difficult for women to access abortion in Ohio.

One provision [prevents abortion clinics from having written transfer agreements](#) with public hospitals. Ohio requires surgical abortion providers to have such transfer agreements so that the clinic can easily transport a patient to the closest hospital if needed. By preventing clinics from having those agreements, the bill would effectively force many to close.

Another provision of the budget bill [prevents state money from going to any nonprofit](#) that refers rape victims to abortion providers, except in cases of medical emergency. Republicans said the two provisions help to ensure that no taxpayer money is being used to pay for abortion services.

If the bill passes the Senate, which it is likely to do, the House and Senate will work out which provisions should remain in the final version. The bill will then be sent to Gov. John Kasich (R) to be signed.

Reproductive rights advocates said the budget bill will make it far more difficult for Ohio women to exercise their constitutionally protected right to have an abortion.

"Ohio state legislators have a responsibility to develop a state budget that protects all of Ohio's residents, but today state senators chose to use the budget as a vehicle to radically restrict the health and rights of women in our state," Stephanie Kight, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Ohio, said in a statement. "If Ohio's senators do not reverse course, this budget could threaten preventive health care programs at Planned Parenthood health centers and could dramatically restrict women's access to safe and legal abortion throughout Ohio."

**Original Article:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/06/ohio-planned-parenthood-budget\\_n\\_3398198.html?ncid=edlinkusaolp00000003](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/06/ohio-planned-parenthood-budget_n_3398198.html?ncid=edlinkusaolp00000003)