



House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

June 22, 2021

Dr. Patrick Gallagher, Chancellor
University of Pittsburgh
420 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Dear Chancellor Gallagher:

I am writing to inform you that I, and my colleagues who have joined me in this letter, will not be supporting the annual allocation of state funds to the University of Pittsburgh made as part of the 2021-2022 state budget. Our decision is based on The University of Pittsburgh's continued participation in research involving the grafting of human fetal skin and organs onto animals.

Testimony offered by officials of the University of Pittsburgh, herein after Pitt, speaking before the House Health Committee earlier this year confirmed the following:

- Fetal tissue from abortions at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, which is operated by the University of Pittsburgh Medical College (UPMC), is collected and retained at Pitt's tissue bank.
- Human tissue from the tissue bank is used in various experiments conducted by Pitt or by academics and researchers working through Pitt at Pitt facilities.
- Experiments include the grafting of human fetal tissue onto lab rodents and the subsequent observation that the rodents are capable of growing "full thickness" skin tissue and human hair at graft sites.
- Human fetal tissue samples used in these experiments is harvested from the scalp and back of fetal remains.
- Experiments also include the grafting of fetal organs in lab rodents.
- The fetal tissue most commonly used is derived from abortions performed at 18-20 weeks gestational age.

Pitt defended its research by asserting that the relevant research was funded primarily through a federal grant received from the National Institutes for Health, which requires that the underlying

Dr. Patrick Gallagher, Chancellor

Page 2

June 22, 2021

research meet all legal standards; however, nobody is questioning whether the research is legal. Money is fungible, and the application of grant funds to specific projects at Pitt allows Pitt to use remaining funds for other purposes. Unquestionably, the research was conducted by personnel employed by Pitt who work at facilities paid for by Pitt. In this way, all money received by Pitt must be considered as comingled funds. State allocations fall into the same pot, even though they are reported by Pitt to be used for other purposes.

In addition to the source of funding for the research, Pitt explained that experiments using human tissue is common and necessary in nearly all medical science. Although this is no doubt true, the ethical consideration of human tissue derived from individuals who die of natural causes, accidents, and suicide should not be equated with tissue taken from abortions performed by the very institution which intends to use the tissue for experimentation. By comparison, would Pitt consider it equally ethical for a suicide clinic in Europe to retain and experiment on the remains of its clients?

Pitt argued that all proposed research programs must first be presented to and approved by Pitt's Institutional Review Board (IRB), which rigorously analyzes the ethics and appropriateness of research projects at Pitt. Pitt neglected to report to the Committee that the Vice President of the IRB, Dr. Beatrice Chen, also oversees the abortion procedures at Magee where fetal tissue samples are collected. That is not the end of Dr. Chen's connection to abortion. She is also the Medical Director of Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania which in turn refers 18-20 weeks gestational age abortions to Magee. At the very least, there is the appearance of a troubling relationship between the IRB and those overseeing the fetal tissue collection through abortions referred to and performed at Magee.

When lawmakers appropriate funds to institutions such as Pitt, we must consider both the intended use of the funds by the recipient, as well as the appropriateness of the recipient's other programs. As earlier stated, money is fungible and all allocations to Pitt for one purpose ultimately benefit Pitt's total bottom line.

State funds do not come from the state. They are the result of money which taxpayers are legally compelled to give to the state. Lawmakers have a fiduciary responsibility to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. That responsibility includes serious consideration of the strongly held beliefs of those whose money we are spending. Programs, such as the fetal tissue experimentation described in this letter, are repugnant to many Pennsylvanians; and the funding of such programs by the state, even if indirectly and tangentially, would violate the trust placed in legislators' hands.

As Pitt reviews future research programs, it is my hope, and that of my colleagues, that it will consider the greater meaning of the common good, to include the sentiments of so many Pennsylvanians who consider experimenting on the remains of aborted children as ghoulish and

grossly disrespectful. When Pitt adopts this more inclusive understanding of the best interests of the people the University serves, it will emerge as an institution which truly stands for the principles of Veritas et Virtus (Truth and Virtue) which the University's motto proclaims.

Respectfully,



The Honorable Kathy L. Rapp
65th Legislative District



The Honorable Bud Cook
49th Legislative District



The Honorable Brett R. Miller
41st Legislative District



The Honorable Tracy Pennycuik
147th Legislative District



The Honorable Stephanie Borowicz
76th Legislative District




The Honorable Rosemary M. Brown
189th Legislative District



The Honorable Paul Schemel
90th Legislative District



The Honorable Perry A. Stambaugh
86th Legislative District



The Honorable Daryl D. Metcalfe
12th Legislative District



The Honorable Brad Roae
6th Legislative District



The Honorable Russ Diamond
102nd Legislative District



The Honorable Joseph Hamm
84th Legislative District

Dr. Patrick Gallagher, Chancellor
Page 4
June 22, 2021



The Honorable David M. Maloney, Sr.
130th Legislative District



The Honorable Joe Kerwin
125th Legislative District



The Honorable David H. Zimmerman
99th Legislative District



The Honorable Mike Jones
93rd Legislative District



The Honorable Rob W. Kauffman
89th Legislative District



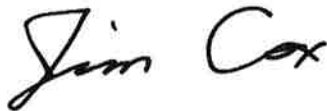
The Honorable Tim Twardzik
123rd Legislative District



The Honorable Leslie Rossi
59th Legislative District



The Honorable Tina Pickett
110th Legislative District



The Honorable Jim Cox
129th Legislative District



The Honorable Andrew Lewis
105th Legislative District



The Honorable David H. Rowe
85th Legislative District



The Honorable Jerry Knowles
124th Legislative District



The Honorable Brian Smith
66th Legislative District