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On Abortion and the African American Family

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As an African American, I am saddened by evidence that Black women continue to be targeted by the abortion industry. A report issued recently by the Guttmacher Institute shows that Black women have abortions at five times the rate of white women. The loss of any child from abortion is a tragedy, but we must ask: Why are minority children being aborted at such disproportionate rates?

Many African Americans are not aware that since the *Roe v. Wade* decision legalized abortion throughout all 9 months of pregnancy, the number one cause of death in the African American community has been abortion. We have lost over 13 million lives. To put that in perspective, it is one third of our present Black population. Since 1973, twice as many Black Americans have died from abortion than from AIDS, accidents, violent crimes, cancer, and heart disease combined.

As I noted in my recent Respect Life Program article, "A Reflection on the African American Family and the Culture of Life" (www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rlp/holley.pdf), our legitimate commitment to other social concerns must not push the primary moral issue of abortion onto the back burner. It clearly must be at the heart and center of our discussion of the survival of African American people.

The Guttmacher Institute called on policy makers to "redouble their efforts to improve access to subsidized contraceptive services for these women." Yet studies have shown that increased access to contraceptives, especially among teens, does not reduce unintended pregnancy and abortion. On the contrary, several studies link increased access to contraceptives to an increase in STDs, with no decrease in abortion rates.

As the research arm of Planned Parenthood, the Guttmacher Institute is shamelessly trying to build a case for receiving more of our taxpayer dollars. Every year the federal government gives over \$300 million to Planned Parenthood. Last year for the first time, Planned Parenthood took in over one billion dollars and reported a profit of \$51 million. I join my voice with others in the Black community who have called for the defunding of the abortion industry.

We must demand an end to the victimizing of African American children, women, families and communities by Planned Parenthood and others in the abortion industry. Over 80 percent of Planned Parenthood clinics are located in minority neighborhoods. Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, began the “Negro Project” to reduce the Black population. We should be shocked and heartbroken by the findings of a recent phone investigation, that recorded a fundraiser at an Iowa Planned Parenthood clinic saying she was “very excited” about a donation specifically for aborting Black babies.

My brothers and sisters, we can overcome abortion in our nation. Let us defend our community by rededicating ourselves to family life and marriage, promoting the gift of chastity and marital fidelity, committing ourselves to prayer and service to others and defending the life and dignity of each human person. We can welcome every child as a gift and we can overcome abortion.