



PARISH 'LIFE' NEWS

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New HHS Strategic Plan is ProLife-Friendly

A draft of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) strategic plan for the next four years shows the federal agency is looking to bolster health care services for Americans at every stage of life, beginning at the moment of conception. Every four years, HHS updates its strategic plan, which describes how the agency will address complex, multifaceted and evolving health and human services issues. The HHS's ultimate goal is "to improve health care outcomes for all people, including the unborn, across health care settings." The [document](#) also prioritizes religious freedom as an important principle for crafting public-health policy as well as department guidelines and procedures. The draft plan states HHS' intent to promote equal and nondiscriminatory participation by faith-based groups in activities funded or conducted by HHS, as well as to remove any barriers preventing faith-based organizations from working with HHS. The proposed changes at HHS have angered pro-abortion groups such as NARAL Pro-Choice America, which [labeled](#) the draft plan's policy implications as "extremist." The Human Rights Campaign, a homosexual-rights advocacy group, [issued an alert](#) criticizing the new plan for erasing "all mentions of the LGBTQ population and their unique health needs." Physicians for Reproductive Health, an organization that works to increase access to contraception and abortion, has criticized the draft plan's statement that life begins at conception, telling media outlets that the statement "[is not a medical concept.](#)" But Jeanne Mancini, the president of the [March for Life Education and Defense Fund](#), and Clarke Forsythe, the senior counsel for [Americans United for Life](#), noted [various scientific studies](#) prove that a new human life begins at the moment of conception.

National Catholic Register, 10/26/17

Physicians Oppose Assisted Suicide

The American College of Physicians, after studying the issue, has issued a policy statement against the legalization of assisted suicide. From the position paper: "Society's goal should be to make dying less, not more, medical. Control over the manner and timing of a person's death should not be, and has not been, a goal of medicine." In short, these ethical physicians urge greater quality of care for the dying—not facilitation of their killing.

LifeSiteNews.com 9/20/17

FDA-Approves Morally-Produced Shingles Vaccine

Shingrix, made by Glaxo SmithKline (GSK) pharmaceutical company is produced using a yeast cell line, unlike Merck's Zostavax, which uses aborted fetal cells. Shingrix combines a protein from the chickenpox virus called glycoprotein E with the immune system-boosting QS-21 Stimulon made by Agenus. This unique component is made from the bark of the Quillaja saponaria (soap bark) evergreen tree native to central Chile. Not only is GSK's Shingrix morally produced, but it is also a far superior product as evidenced by lengthy clinical trials. The studies demonstrated that Shingrix is 97.2% effective in people over 50 years old. It also maintained 90% efficacy in those 70 years old and above with 95% immunity maintained after four years. On the other hand, Merck's Zostavax, is only 38% effective in people over 70 and only 40% duration of immunity after four years.

[Christian Newswire](#), 10/25/17

American Heritage Girls to Remain Exclusively Girl-Oriented

With the recent statement shared by the Boy Scouts of America regarding changes in membership, [American Heritage Girls](#) (AHG) announced that the organization will remain committed to the foundation on which the non-profit was built 22 years ago—providing an all-girl environment in which girls 5 to 18 years of age can thrive and grow. AHG is the premier national character development organization for young women that embraces Christian values and encourages family involvement. AHG currently has over 47,000 members, including AHG girls, leaders, and adult volunteers. These members comprise over 1,020 troops throughout the USA, as well as global representation in 12 countries through the Trailblazer Program. AGH has a close partnership with its boys counterpart, [Trail Life USA](#)—a Christian outdoor adventure, character and leadership program for boys and young men, K-12. Chartered through churches in 48 states, the program centers on outdoor experiences and biblical values that build a young man's skills and allow him to grow on a personal level and as a role model and leader for his peers. While allowing boys and girls to develop their abilities, confidence, and faith in the welcoming environment of their own gender, youth are able to explore and grow at their own pace. [Christian Newswire](#), 10/12/17



PROJECT MUSTARD SEED

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Operations: **apparel** (accessories, clothing), **eyewear** (sunglasses,) **footwear, recreation/sports** (clothing)

Please write to:

Ms. Diane von Furstenberg, CEO
Diane von Furstenberg, Inc.
440 W. 14th Street New York NY
10014

Tell her to
stop funding
Planned
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<http://www.dvf.com/>

Diane von Furstenberg, Inc. has been on the Boycott List since 2009 and we last wrote to them in 2012

ACTION ALERT

PA State Senators voted 37-13 to restore the status quo of the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by passing HB 1388 amended to exclude gender reassignment surgery. Evidence shows the vast majority of children who identify with the opposite sex ultimately end up changing that identity as they grow. Not only are children harmed by having the state endorse and pay for irreversible surgery, but it’s a poor use of limited tax dollars. The cost for one child to go through gender reassignment procedures can total well over \$100,000. HB1388 now moves back to the PA House of Representatives for consideration. Use PFC’s [Citizen Action Center](#) to contact your State Representative today in support of HB1388 as amended.

“The recently-advanced hypothesis of reopening the way for the dignity of the person by radically neutralizing sexual difference and, therefore, the understanding between man and woman, is not right ... The biological and psychical manipulation of sexual difference, which biomedical technology allows us to perceive as completely available to free choice – which it is not! – thus risks dismantling the source of energy that nurtures the alliance between man and woman and which renders it creative and fruitful.”

—Pope Francis, 10/5/17

PA Senate Resolution SR174 calls for the respect and protection of individuals and families with Down syndrome. To show support for this resolution, use PFC’s [Citizen Action Center](#) to contact your State Senator. Pennsylvania Family Council, 10/25/17

In-Vivo Surgery Mends a Birth Defect

A team of surgeons performed experimental surgery on a fetus at Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston. The fetus, 24 weeks and two days old, weighing less than two pounds, had a severe form of spina bifida, in which the backbone and spinal cord do not develop properly. Children born with this condition usually cannot walk, and suffer from fluid buildup in the brain, lack of bladder control and other complications. There are 1,500 to 2,000 cases a year in the US. Spina bifida occurs early, at three to four weeks of pregnancy, when the tissue forming the spinal column should fold into a tube but does not close properly. Some spinal damage is caused by amniotic fluid, which turns increasingly toxic to the exposed nerve tissue as the pregnancy progresses and the fetus passes more and more wastes into the fluid. Surgeons thought that if the opening could be closed before birth, sealing out the fluid, some of the nerve damage might be averted. In the experimental procedure, surgeons make a wide incision in the mother’s lower abdomen, gently lift-out her uterus — still attached internally — and make two tiny, 4-millimeter slits. In one, they insert a “fetoscope,” a small telescope fitted with a camera, light and grasping tool. The second slit is for other miniature instruments used to mend the spinal opening. A landmark study published in 2011 found that—for carefully selected fetuses—prenatal surgery was better than the standard practice of operating after birth. The percentage of children who could walk independently rose to 40% from 20%, and the need for an implanted shunt to drain excess fluid from his brain was cut in half, to 40% from 82%. No fetuses have died, and some of the mothers have been able to have vaginal deliveries. Their pregnancies appear to last longer, coming closer to full-term than with the open procedure. More research is needed, but other medical centers have begun adopting the technique. Surgeons at Johns Hopkins have used it to treat five patients, and Dr. Michael A. Belfort who developed the prenatal technique with Dr. William Whitehead, is helping to train colleagues at Stanford. Doctors who practice the open procedure are critical, and warn that the carbon dioxide used to inflate the uterus during the prenatal procedure may harm the fetus and cause neurological problems. Dr. Belfort said there has been no evidence of harm so far.

[The New York Times](#), 10/23/17



Tuesday, November 7th, is Election Day. Voters will vote for several judicial positions, Allegheny County council representatives, City of Pittsburgh mayor and city council representatives. The [LifePAC voter information flyer](#) lists the Pro-Life candidates for some offices.