April 28, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn
Chairman
Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Chairman Blackburn:

We write to you as members of Congress who are deeply concerned with the way the Select Panel is conducting itself, specifically in its recent attempts to investigate how researchers acquire fetal tissue.

As you may know, after more than two months of reviewing the joint inquiry, a grand jury in Texas recently cleared Planned Parenthood of any wrongdoing. Instead, the grand jury indicted two of the anti-abortion activists from the Center for Medical Progress for felonies committed in the course of making hidden-camera videos. Despite continued and repeated affirmation that Planned Parenthood broke no laws and did nothing wrong, the Select Investigative Panel has continued to endanger healthcare providers and patients with its extreme rhetoric claiming that Planned Parenthood is selling baby parts.

Equally concerning are the investigations into scientists doing research that uses fetal tissue. We are particularly concerned by the recent reports that the select panel had issued 11 subpoenas to medical supply companies and laboratories that will seek the names of researchers, graduate students, laboratory technicians, and administrative personnel involved with fetal tissue research. This misuse of subpoena power is clearly aimed at not only stopping the progress of crucial medical research, but personally intimidating the scientists who are engaged in this life-saving work.

As members of Congress who understand the importance of medical research and on behalf of the millions of Americans who are waiting for the cures to Parkinson’s, Multiple Sclerosis, and the many other diseases awaiting a cure, we feel compelled to condemn these dangerous tactics. This body has spent more than enough taxpayer money doing the bidding of the National Republican Congressional Committee. It is clear that this Panel serves no other purpose than to carry out politically-motivated attacks on Planned Parenthood and it should be dissolved immediately.

Sincerely,

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress
Adam Smith  
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress

Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress

Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress

Katherine Clark  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

John Conyers Jr.  
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress
Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress

Ted Lieu  
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III  
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress

Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz  
Member of Congress

Patrick E. Murphy  
Member of Congress
Alma Adams  
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr  
Member of Congress

Nita Lowey  
Member of Congress

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress

Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress

Elizabeth H. Esty  
Member of Congress

André Carson  
Member of Congress

John Lewis  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress

Jim Himes  
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress
Janice Hahn  
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress

Dan Kildee  
Member of Congress

Steve Israel  
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress

Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress