

SPEAKING OUT

The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Revisit Planned Parenthood's In Control



Your Turn
Carol Crossed
Guest columnist

On Dec 20, the Rochester City Council voted to include funding to Planned Parenthood for their program In Control, as part of their initiative to fight gun violence. Despite 26 persons speaking against the funding at the council meeting, members voted 7-2 in favor of including funding to the nation's largest nonprofit that performs abortions.

Within hours, the city announced a second strategy to fight violence: its attack against gun manufacturers. As a person who believes in restrictions on both abortion and guns to fight violence, it is ironic that the city does not see the similarities of both of these "rights" industries and their relationship to the prevalence of children's lives being destroyed.

The city of Rochester conflates Planned Parenthood with peace to their own detriment. It is more honest to connect it with the violence of the gun in-

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dustry.

Both the gun and abortion industries justify their existence for self-protection. Women are the fastest-growing segment of gun owners, many since the pandemic and protests of police brutality, who claim their purchase is for self-defense.

A 1980s National Rifle Association advertisement actually used abortion rights language to market guns to women: "A gun is a choice women need to know more about and be free to make. The NRA is working to ensure the freedom of that choice always exists." However, the Violence Policy Center reports that women are more likely to be a victim of a homicide with a handgun than to use a handgun in a justifiable homicide.

Likewise, the abortion rights lobby claim abortion is needed for instances of rape, incest or life endangerment, but only a tiny fraction of women pursuing

an abortion cite one of these reasons, according to the Guttmacher Institute, an international organization devoted to reproductive health and rights issues.

The primary victims of abortion are human beings who would have been born in ensuing months. Meanwhile, guns have surpassed car accidents as the leading cause of death for America's children, according to a report in The New York Times Magazine last month. In both instances, often minorities and the poor are victims.

While campaign donations by the gun rights and gun control were nearly equal in 2021-22 election campaigns, pro-abortion rights groups gave seven times more money to politicians supporting their view than did pro-life groups to other politicians. In the hours after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade last year, declaring there is no right to an abortion in the Constitution, even more money poured into the cam-

paign funds of politicians supporting abortion rights. Are consciences being bought with election dollars?

"Rights" supporters consider guns and abortion symbols of American freedom and claim even reasonable limitations will infringe on their privacy. Planned Parenthood fights spousal notification and even parental consent laws for a teen's abortion. The gun industry continually fights even modest gun restrictions in private venues.

These supporters are right about one thing: Abortion and gun violence will happen in Rochester, whether legal or not.

But laws prohibiting violence instruct a society's conduct and serve to shape attitudes about moral behavior. Relentless unmitigated individualism requires logical limits to our freedoms to reduce violence in our world. As the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The law cannot make you love me, but it can keep you from lynching me."

Carol Crossed is a member of Democrats for Life of America and president of the board of Feminists Choosing Life of New York.