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House Judiciary Hearing, June 9, 2026  
The Southern Poverty Law Center: Manufacturing Hate, Part II

Dear Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Raskin, and Members of the Committee:

Heartbeat International serves as the largest network of pregnancy help organizations in the world. As the House Judiciary Committee examines the role that the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has played in shaping public policy and assessing the domestic extremist threat environment, we respectfully submit the personal experience of an employee as an SPLC target and our assessment of the SPLC's defamatory and biased review of the pregnancy help community, including Heartbeat.

**A story of personal harm:**

Before serving as Heartbeat's Director of Government Relations, Jessica Prol Smith experienced the life-threatening consequences of the SPLC's dangerous decision to place Christian conservative organizations on the same "hate map" as Neo-Nazis.

In 2012, Smith worked for the Family Research Council (FRC), a public advocacy organization that promotes the policies that protect the family, promote human dignity and support religious liberty. Smith never anticipated that her participation in conservative Christian advocacy would make her the target of an act of terrorism, but it did—a life-altering experience that FRC President Tony Perkins has described in a [recent testimony](#) to this committee.

In 2019, then a writer and editor for Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), Smith reflected on the SPLC-inspired shooting and wrote in [USA Today](#) that, "The Southern Poverty Law Center is a hate-based scam that nearly caused me to be murdered: After internal challenges with discrimination, the Southern Poverty Law Center can't call itself an arbiter of justice." In response, the SPLC chose to fundraise off of her vulnerable account of that exceptionally traumatic day. The organization has also chosen to place ADF—a legal advocacy organization with a record of 18 Supreme Court wins—on the aforementioned "hate map."

Today, Smith serves as a strategic bridge between Heartbeat and federal and state lawmakers, monitoring policy developments and advocating for Heartbeat's interests in the public square. In this role, she has become more familiar with the vast network of medical professionals, counselors, and client advocates who offer comprehensive, compassionate, and free services to women and families in need. Similar to its flawed characterization of conservative groups overall, the SPLC offers a dismal, biased, and defamatory account of the pregnancy help community she and other Heartbeat employees represent.

## What is Heartbeat International?

As the world's largest network of pregnancy help organizations, Heartbeat supports over 4,000 affiliated pregnancy centers, medical clinics, maternity homes, and adoption agencies across more than 100 nations. Heartbeat's mission is to equip life-affirming pregnancy help providers with training, resources, and support, serving women, men, and families facing unplanned pregnancies. Key services include Option Line and the Abortion Pill Rescue Network (APRN). Option Line is a 24/7 multilingual contact center connecting callers with local pregnancy help organizations. Since 2003, it has facilitated millions of connections — surpassing 2 million in 2025 alone — and has been featured as a highlighted resource on [Moms.gov](https://www.moms.gov) since May 2026. Heartbeat's APRN provides 24/7 emergency access to medical professionals for women seeking to reverse a chemical abortion, with data showing us helping save over 8,000 lives to date through abortion pill reversal (APR), with 1,500+ medical professionals involved worldwide.

## The SPLC slanders pregnancy resource centers:

Readers browsing the SPLC website find a litany of allegations against the pregnancy help community. In its 2024 report, "[The Landscape of Today's Anti-Abortion Movement](#)," the SPLC alleges that "fake" clinics "lure pregnant people" and serve as an "insidious arm of the anti-abortion movement." The SPLC ignores the wide range of services centers offer and trashes APR—apparently dismissing the thousands of children successfully rescued through the medical protocol as either a mirage or a mistake.

## Heartbeat tells the true story:

- **PRCs deliver high-quality, voluntary services with exceptional client satisfaction**

Pregnancy resource centers (PRCs) provide free or low-cost, compassionate care that women actively choose and overwhelmingly praise. According to the Charlotte Lozier Institute's [2025 National Pregnancy Center Report](#), 2,775 centers delivered over \$452 million in medical care, support, education, and material goods in 2024 alone. Client satisfaction ranked at 98%—higher than many leading consumer brands. Far from "deceptive," these centers respect women's autonomy by offering unbiased information and numerous services without pressure or fees. This track record of trust and tangible help demonstrates PRCs as genuine community assets and reflects principled adherence to the standards in their "[Commitment of Care](#)."

- **PRCs provide substantial free resources and comprehensive support**

Heartbeat's network of PRCs offer a wide array of practical, life-affirming resources that ease burdens on families. Services commonly include free pregnancy tests, limited obstetric ultrasounds, STI testing, parenting education, material aid (diapers, formula, baby clothes), post-abortion support, and referrals for housing or adoption. In 2024, affiliated centers recorded over 2.16 million client visits and served hundreds of thousands with goods and professional guidance. These voluntary programs fill critical gaps in maternal care, especially for low-income women and families, by

providing holistic support that extends well beyond pregnancy—promoting healthy choices and long-term stability through education and generosity. While some centers have benefitted from limited state grant funding, PRCs overwhelmingly rely on the generosity of private, local supporters.

- **Abortion Pill Reversal offers hope and proven results for women who change their minds**

When women regret starting a chemical abortion and seek help, the APRN provides timely, ethical medical protocols using progesterone. As Smith has noted previously, “APR is a safe and effective way for a woman to improve her odds of continuing her pregnancy to term after she has ingested mifepristone — the first pill in an abortion drug regimen designed to block progesterone from the growing baby.” As of early 2026, statistics suggest that the APRN has helped save over 8,000 lives, with peer-reviewed data showing reversal success rates of 64-68% and no increased risk of birth defects. APR offers women a second chance at reproductive choice. In some cases, it offers hope to a woman who has been forced or coerced into taking chemical abortion drugs against her will. The thousands of living babies saved by APR and the grateful, emotional testimonies of their mothers demonstrate that PRCs prioritize women’s well-being and access to options at every stage.

- **PRCs face real violence while committing to peaceful service**

Despite focusing exclusively on peaceful, non-coercive help, pregnancy resource centers have endured significant targeted harassment and violence—particularly surrounding the *Dobbs* decision in 2022. Documented incidents include scores of cases of vandalism, firebombing, smashed windows, and threatening graffiti (e.g., “If abortions aren’t safe, neither are you”) at PRCs and related sites. The pro-abortion extremist group, Jane’s Revenge, took credit for over a dozen acts of vandalism—including firebombing. The SPLC has remained noticeably silent about these pro-abortion acts of vandalism and terrorism.

- **Heartbeat faces legal harassment for sharing a message California and New York AGs do not endorse**

Heartbeat continues to confront California and New York’s efforts to restrict women’s access to life-affirming information and care. In two separate lawsuits (*The People of the State of California v. Heartbeat International & RealOptions* and *James v. Heartbeat International, et al*), hostile attorneys general are abusing their responsibility to address consumer fraud and seeking to silence Heartbeat’s speech about APR, because they disagree with our viewpoint about the protocol. The SPLC can opine about a medical protocol it dislikes, but legal declarations filed in the California case include testimony from women who underwent APR and went on to deliver healthy children, demonstrating the real-life impact of preserving access to this information.

### **Advocate for the vulnerable or political pariah?**

The SPLC was once a more honest advocate for vulnerable populations. But its irresponsible and slanderous behavior threatens the pregnancy help community—and the vulnerable women we serve. By misrepresenting Heartbeat’s work, the SPLC creates the plausibility structure and implicit justification for even more violent attacks, smear campaigns, corporate discrimination, and legal harassment against the pregnancy help community. Worse, the SPLC serves as a menacing obstacle to women who would otherwise happily benefit from our comprehensive, compassionate care. Smith and other Heartbeat employees are intimately familiar with the consequences of this reckless hostility.

The SPLC refuses to understand or appreciate the support, hope, and community that pregnancy resource centers offer. Regrettably, this bias and slander appear to be part of a larger pattern—one that poisons our public discourse and harms real Americans. Heartbeat’s affiliated resource centers, medical clinics, and maternity homes will continue to offer free resources and support—even in the face of political hostility. But our country will be a better place if the organizations fomenting such hostility are held accountable.

Respectfully submitted,

Heartbeat International  
Jor-El Godsey, President  
Jessica Prol Smith, Director of Government Relations