

# PROBE OF FETAL RESEARCH; UNIV. OF PITTSBURGH TARGETED

In September, the University of Pittsburgh agreed to have its fetal tissue research practices independently reviewed by the Washington, D.C. law firm of Hyman, Phelps & McNamara. In August, we called upon the Pennsylvania Auditor General to launch such an investigation. We are delighted that our effort was successful.

Over the summer, we learned that Judicial Watch was representing the Center for Medical Progress in a quest to obtain documentation of alleged human organ harvesting at Pitt. According to their probe, organs have been harvested while the baby's heart is still beating. The University has steadfastly denied wrongdoing.

On August 17, Bill Donohue wrote to Pennsylvania Auditor General, Timothy L. DeFoor, asking him to determine whether state and federal funds are being used by Pitt for arguably criminal activity.

Donohue wrote in support of State Rep. Kathleen Rapp, and Sean Parnell, who is running for a U.S. Senate seat; both initially called for an investigation. He also wrote to Patrick Gallagher, Pitt's Chancellor, Dr. Anantha Shekhar, Dean of the School of Medicine, and David Seldin, Assistant Vice Chancellor for News.

In our news release that same day, we printed the email address of the Auditor General, asking our subscribers to contact him. Thousands did, and their effort paid dividends.

Is Pitt involved in a fetal organ "chop shop"? We do not know. But we need to find out without delay.

"If it is true," Donohue said in his letter to the Auditor

General, "as some doctors have said, that in order to perform some of these procedures, 'The baby's going to have to be either born alive or be killed immediately prior to delivery,' then justice demands that a thorough investigation take place. I urge you to do so."

In February, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities issued an excellent statement on the propriety of human fetal tissue research. It began by emphasizing that "the dignity and inviolability of human life at every stage of development is a foundational principle of any truly civilized society."

Regarding this kind of research, it implored the government, which allows abortion, not to "add injury to insult by treating the innocent abortion victim as a convenient laboratory animal for research protocols deemed unethical when applied to other members of the human family."

If Pitt has nothing to hide, then so be it. But if some of the horrible accusations are true, then it must cease and desist and be held accountable. We are pleased to have played an important role in getting to the bottom of this issue.