

Reproaction

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P.O. Box 7435
Arlington, VA 22207

May 23, 2017

The Honorable Joe Manchin
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Manchin,

As an abortion access and reproductive justice group with more than 34,000 supporters, we are writing to express our dismay that you met with David Daleiden, the founder of the Center for Medical Progress, whose deceptive, highly edited sting videos have led to 15 felony charges against the anti-abortion activists who made the videos and whose smear campaign was quoted by a terrorist who murdered three people and injured nine others at a Planned Parenthood health center in Colorado Springs. To be clear, 12 states opened investigations into Planned Parenthood following Daleiden's smear campaign and found no proof of his claims.

You recently told *Rewire* that Daleiden was "explaining" his case for defunding Planned Parenthood, and said he was "getting me more information." Senator Manchin, we are well aware of your position on abortion and that you have voted against women's human rights on multiple occasions. That said, there is no justifiable reason for you to legitimize a man who spawns anti-abortion terrorism, or to seek information from a man a judge has said "created a fake company and lied to gain access" to abortion providers. We hope you question any information he and the group with him gave you. When someone is so clearly willing to manipulate information and commit fraud to achieve their goal, it is foolish to believe anything they claim to be fact.

According to the National Abortion Federation (NAF), which has monitored violence and disruption against abortion providers for nearly four decades, hate speech and Internet harassment, death threats, attempted murder, and *murder* skyrocketed after Daleiden released his videos. The year his fraudulent videos hit the Internet, NAF members received 94 death threats or threats of harm – and that's 93 more threats than the previous year.

We are painfully aware that your meeting with David Daleiden took place at a time when several of your colleagues who do identify with an evidence-based abortion rights position initiated an unhelpful and unnecessary conversation about a "big tent" that has thrown into doubt who, if anyone, will stand up for abortion rights and women's equality. Your meeting with Daleiden has caused us to wonder if this big tent is so broad as to encompass anything and everything – including anti-abortion terrorists.

We ask that you apologize for meeting with David Daleiden, that you denounce his "work" and the anti-abortion terrorism it has spawned, and that you commit to not meet with anti-abortion terrorists in the future. If you are looking for evidence-based, unbiased, medically accurate information, we are here.

Sincerely,

Erin Matson and Pamela Merritt
Co-Founders and Co-Directors, Reproaction