

OBITUARIES

LaNeil Baker

LaNeil Baker, 90, of Paducah, formerly of Elizabethtown, passed away Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at Baptist Health in Paducah.

She was born Nov. 11, 1934, in Friendship, Tennessee, to the late John and Marguerite Powell.

LaNeil was a proud graduate of Murray State University, where she cultivated her passion for teaching and lifelong learning. Her dedication to education was evident in her long and distinguished career as an elementary teacher with the Elizabethtown Independent School District. LaNeil loved spending time with her family. In her retirement years, she was an avid reader and scrapbooker. She embraced technology and enjoyed playing games and researching on her iPad and computer.

LaNeil was preceded in death by her parents; her husband of 63 years, Karl Keith Baker; and a brother, Jon Franklin Powell.

LaNeil is survived by her three children, Karla (Richard) Walker of Boca Raton, Florida, Elizabeth (Randall) Puryear of Mount Juliet, Tennessee, and John (Darla) Baker of Paducah; four grandchildren, Rachel (Tyler Mamone)



Walker of Miami, Megan Jane Walker (C.J.) Steffens of Jacksonville, Florida, Aaron (Peyton) Puryear of Mount Juliet and Daniel Puryear of Nashville, Tennessee; and four great-grandchildren, Lincoln, Liesl and Lively Puryear and Cooper Steffens.

In accordance with LaNeil's wishes, there will be no visitation. There will be a private family graveside service in Elizabethtown at a future date.

Expressions of sympathy may be made in the form of contributions to the American Heart Association or the charity of one's choice.

Milner & Orr Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Paducah are in charge of all arrangements.

Share a memory or leave a message for the family at milnerandorr.com.



Jose Luis Magana | Associated Press

Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life of America, speaks during an anti-abortion rally on Capitol Hill in Washington on Thursday.

Anti-abortion groups aim to end Planned Parenthood funding

BY CHRISTINE FERNANDO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Major anti-abortion groups gathered in the nation's capital on Thursday to begin a lobbying effort with Congress and President Donald Trump's administration aimed at eliminating funding for Planned Parenthood, with some calling on Elon Musk to make the organization one of his cost-cutting targets.

The anti-abortion groups are taking aim at abortion providers under an initiative called Defund Planned Parenthood, which targets federal Medicaid funding for the reproductive health care provider. More than 150 of the groups signed a letter Wednesday urging Congress to cut Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood and other health care centers that provide abortions through the budget reconciliation process.

"Today is a historic moment where the pro-life movement stands united behind one message: Defund Planned Parenthood," said Kristan Hawkins, president of Students for Life, as she kicked off the rally in view of the U.S. Capitol.

She called on Trump and other Republicans to "defund your political enemies," adding that the abortion lobby has long targeted Republicans.

The federal Hyde Amendment already restricts government funding for most abortions, and less than 5% of the services Planned Parenthood provides are abortions, according to the organization's 2023 annual report.

Vicki Ringer, Planned Parenthood's South Carolina director of public affairs, said claims that Planned Parenthood uses Medicaid funding for abortion is "an attempt to mislead the public" and emphasized Planned Parenthood's role in providing broader reproductive health care.

"We should be expanding health care to low-income people rather than trying to kick off these people who rely on us for health care," Ringer said.

Planned Parenthood provides a wide range of services besides abortion. Its most recent annual report shows that contraceptive services and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections make up the vast majority of its medical care. It also performs more cancer screening

and prevention procedures than abortions, according to the report.

The national group said eliminating its federal funding could put those services out of reach for millions of people and would hit low-income communities with little access to health care hardest.

Rachel Rebouche, dean of Temple University's Beasley School of Law, said the Defund Planned Parenthood movement has been building for 10 years but has gained momentum as the anti-abortion movement has been emboldened by Trump's presidential victory and by Republicans winning control of Congress in November.

"We're seeing more enthusiasm in states like South Carolina and others to close down Planned Parenthood under the banner of stopping abortions, which their laws already do," she said.

Tina Whittington, executive vice president at Students for Life, said she was confident that Trump would consider cutting Planned Parenthood's Medicaid funding and that Musk's Department of Government Efficiency could be just the tool for doing it.

"I'm more confident because we're in an era where DOGE's actions are targeting waste, fraud and abuse," she said. "And this is a great way to do that."

The Supreme Court announced it will hear a case involving South Carolina's attempt to strip Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood. Experts say the lawsuit could prompt similar efforts in conservative states across the country to chip away at the organization's funding.

During a 2015 push to strip Planned Parenthood funding, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that doing so would cost the government \$130 million over 10 years.

Meanwhile, lawmakers in at least three states — Missouri, Ohio and South Carolina — have introduced bills this year aiming to create tax breaks for anti-abortion centers.

The strategies come during a time when abortion rights advocates are warning that Trump and his Cabinet hold significant power to restrict access to medication abortion nationwide.

Rather than immediately heeding calls from anti-abortion allies to restrict Medicaid funding for clinics

that provide abortions, Trump has made quieter moves after waffling on the issue on the campaign trail.

He reinstated a policy that requires foreign nongovernmental agencies to certify that they don't provide or promote abortion if they receive U.S. aid for family planning. He also pardoned several anti-abortion activists who had been convicted of blockading abortion clinics and used wording related to fetal personhood in an executive order rolling back protections for transgender people.

The Republican president has appointed abortion opponents to some key Cabinet positions that could affect the availability of medication abortion and contraception, Medicaid coverage for family planning services, collection of abortion-related data and abortion access for troops and veterans. In a pre-recorded message to the thousands who attended the March for Life in January, Trump said he proudly stood for families and for life.

Alabama Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville said during Thursday's rally that he "truly believes President Trump is the most pro-life president in history."

"Absolutely zero taxpayer dollars should be going to abortion," he said. "... And I know President Trump agrees."

Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of SBA Pro-Life America, said Republican control of the White House and Congress represents a

unique opportunity to push for legislation targeting Planned Parenthood.

"I believe this is the moment they will be defunded, and this is the blow that will bring them down," she said.

Advocates on either side of the abortion debate are waiting to see if Trump's Department of Justice will revive the Comstock Act, a 19th-century obscenity law, to restrict the mailing of medication abortion or other materials used for abortions. Attorney General Pam Bondi has a history of defending abortion restrictions, and her confirmation was celebrated by abortion opponents.

At the Thursday rally, some passers-by shouted support for Planned Parenthood, saying the organization saves lives.

Haven Wright, an 83-year-old retired entrepreneur visiting Washington to see the National Museum of African American History and Culture, happened upon the rally and noted that Planned Parenthood also provided health care for underserved communities.

"They are the main doctors for many, many poor women," she said. "They are their main resource for all kinds of reproductive health care."

Wright said she had two abortions while in her 20s, once while she had an IUD and another time after she was raped. She said she was grateful she had the "agency to get the care I needed."

"Women," she said, "deserve a choice."

SERVICES

Margie Brewer, 75, of the Levelwoods community, died, Monday, March 24, 2025. The funeral is at 1 p.m. today at Levelwoods United Methodist Church with burial in the church cemetery. Visitation resumes at 9 a.m. today at Bennett-Bertram Funeral Home in Hodgenville.

Michael Anthony Crofts, 67, of Rineyville, died Monday, March 10, 2025. A celebration of life is from 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday at Freeman Lake Park in Elizabethtown. Nelson-Edelen-Bennett Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

Ernest Lee "Ernie" Jones Sr., 76, of Elizabethtown, died Sunday, March 23, 2025. The funeral is at 1 p.m. April 5 at Percell and Sons Funeral Home in Elizabethtown with burial in Elizabethtown City Cemetery. Visitation begins at 6 p.m. April 4 at the funeral home.

Jon Lynn Kapfhammer, 68, of Elizabethtown, died Monday, Dec. 2, 2024. A memorial service is at 6 p.m. Saturday at Memorial United Methodist Church in Elizabethtown.

Ernest Emeral McCray III, 61, died Thursday, March 20, 2025. The funeral is at noon Monday at Truth Baptist Church in Radcliff with burial with military rites in Kentucky Veterans Cemetery-Central in Radcliff. Visitation begins at 11 a.m. Monday at the church. Percell and Sons Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

Charles R. Milam, 76, of Elizabethtown, died Monday, March 24, 2025. A graveside service with military honors is at 1:30 p.m. April 4 at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery-Central in Radcliff. Chism Family Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

James Ray Saltsman, 88, of Leitchfield, died Wednesday, March 26, 2025. The funeral is at 11 a.m. CDT Monday at Dermitt Funeral Home

in Leitchfield with burial in Williams Cemetery. Visitation is from 4 to 8 p.m. CDT Sunday and continues at 9 a.m. CDT Monday at the funeral home.

Theresa Marie Schwanz, 64, of Elizabethtown, died Thursday, March 20, 2025. Cremation was chosen. Visitation is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. today at Brown Funeral Home in Elizabethtown.

Joan Marie Seelye, 83, died Tuesday, March 25, 2025. The funeral is at 1 p.m. Monday at Hager Funeral Home in Brandenburg with burial in Buck Grove Cemetery. Visitation is from 4 to 8 p.m. Sunday and continues at 10 a.m. Monday at the funeral home.

Jesse Howard Shipp, 91, of Glendale, died Friday, March 21, 2025. A celebration of life is at 2 p.m. Saturday at Brown Funeral Home in Elizabethtown. Visitation begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at the funeral home.

Carl Windell Smith, 82, of Clarkson, died Wednesday, March 26, 2025. The funeral is at 11 a.m. CDT Monday at Leitchfield Funeral Home with burial in Peonia Christian Cemetery. Visitation is from 1 to 7 p.m. CDT Sunday and continues at 9 a.m. CDT Monday at the funeral home.

Billy Strader, 70, of Sonora, died Sunday, March 23, 2025. The funeral is at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Brown Funeral Home in Elizabethtown with burial in White Mills Cemetery. Visitation is from 4 to 8 p.m. Monday and continues at 9 a.m. Tuesday at the funeral home.

James Wilson, 70, of Vine Grove, died Wednesday, March 26, 2025. A committal service with military honors is at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery-Central in Radcliff. Chism Family Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

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