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***Positive Women's Network – Philadelphia Region Condemns Policies that lead to Unsafe Abortions for Poor Women and Women of Color***

Philadelphia, PA, Monday January 24, 2011— After 32 years of deadly and dehumanizing conditions, a West Philly abortion clinic serving primarily low-income women of color has been forced to close its doors.

An investigation found that the clinic's conditions were unsanitary and dangerous, and that staff had not received adequate training to provide safe abortions, leading to multiple unreported and unnecessary deaths. Dr. Kermit Gosnell, the clinic's founder, was charged last week with eight counts of murder.

"Safe abortions should be a right, not a privilege for those who can pay more," said Teresa Sullivan, PWN member and Prison Outreach Specialist at Philadelphia FIGHT.

A grand jury report echoed this theme. "We think the reason no one acted is because the women in question were poor and of color," the report said, "and because the victims were infants without identities, and because the subject was the political football of abortion."

PWN-Philly Coordinator, Waheedah Shabazz-El added: "Some of these women ended up sterilized, in the emergency room, or even dead following their procedures. We know many HIV-positive women have received care at this clinic. Policies like the Hyde amendment allow states to choose whether or not to fund abortions for women getting services through public assistance. This is unacceptable."

Last week Speaker of the House John Boehner said attacking women's right to choose was one of his top priorities.

The Philadelphia Positive Women's Network, a membership body of women living with HIV in the Philadelphia metropolitan area, condemns treating women's right to choose as a bargaining chip in policy discussions and demands that all women have equitable access to safe, high quality, sexual and reproductive health services—regardless of race, ethnicity, wealth, income, age or HIV status.

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Who we are:

*The U.S. Positive Women's Network (PWN) is a project of WORLD (Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Disease) in Oakland, CA. We are a national membership body that exists to strengthen the strategic power of women living with HIV in the United States. PWN-Philly is one of several regional organizing groups. For more information please visit: [www.pwn-usa.org](http://www.pwn-usa.org) or join the PWN mailing list by emailing [pwn@womenhiv.org](mailto:pwn@womenhiv.org).*