

Susan G. Komen & Planned Parenthood: The Cost of NOT Understanding the Connections  
Between Cultural Values and Brand Values for Nonprofit Organizations

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Winter 2014

### Abstract

On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the Associated Press (@AP) tweeted “AP Exclusive: Amid abortion debate, Susan G. Komen cancer charity halting grants to Planned Parenthood,” with a web link to the AP story written by David Crary. News spread quickly, elevating Susan G. Komen (SGK) to a top Google search term and a “top trending topic in the U.S. on Twitter,” (Preston, 2012). Supporters and detractors posted 3,484 messages on the SGK Facebook page within the first 24 hours, by February 4<sup>th</sup>, 31,272 comments had been posted. Almost eighty percent of the messages expressed an opinion about the decision. The Facebook posters perceived SGK’s decision to disqualify Planned Parenthood as betraying SGK’s organizational mission, i.e., being “for women.” Consequently, what was a social media crisis for SGK was a solid win for Planned Parenthood. Nonprofit brands are aspirational in nature, promoting a vision of an idealistic future; i.e., SGK aspires for a world free of breast cancer. Therefore, it is important for public relations practitioners to understand the connections stakeholders make between the brand and larger cultural values.

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On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the Associated Press (@AP) tweeted “AP Exclusive: Amid abortion debate, Susan G. Komen cancer charity halting grants to Planned Parenthood,” with a web link to the AP story written by David Crary (see Appendix). Bloggers weighed in on both sides of the issue with *Slate* blogger, Amanda Marcotte, exclaiming, “Susan G. Komen’s Act of Cowardice.” and *LifeSiteNews* blogger, John-Henry Westen, announcing, “Susan G. Komen for the Cure has announced it is shutting the door on funding the abortion giant after seven years of pressure from pro-life Americans.”

The news spread quickly, making Susan G. Komen (SGK) a top Google search term and a “top trending topic in the U.S. on Twitter,” (Preston, 2012). Supporters and detractors posted 3,484 messages on the SGK Facebook page within the first 24 hours. In a span of five days, over 31,000 comments had been posted. Almost eighty percent of the messages expressed an opinion about the decision; of those expressing an opinion, seventy-six percent were opposed. Some were strongly opposed; for example, 17.6% of the messages contained a form of the word “shame,” inferring a betrayal by SGK and a subsequent loss of honor.

### **The Nonprofit Economy**

Nonprofit organizations “perform the kinds of public-type functions typically identified with government,” (Weisbrod, 1998, p. 2). However, government’s ability to provide services is dictated by the willingness of voters to support a program. Consequently, nonprofit organizations fill the gap between government services and the needs of disadvantaged groups (Weisbrod). “When populations are diverse...nonprofits are... an alternative mechanism for providing public-type services,” (p. 3).

The services provided by nonprofit organizations are “socially valuable but privately unprofitable,” (Weisbrod, 1998, p. 19) therefore a provider must seek financing, typically in the form of donations and/or government appropriations. Nonprofit organizations, rather than being isolated from the economy, must “compete with and collaborate with” for-profit and governmental organizations to “find workers, managers, and other resources to produce their outputs,” (p. 4). Additionally, nonprofit organizations must “tailor its production to a donor’s wishes” and may need to avoid being linked to politically controversial issues (p. 15). Weisbrod argues that nonprofits are increasingly being seen as “self-serving entities that pursue the interests of their top officials and board members,” (p. 8).

The struggle to satisfy the competing demands between the mission and sources of funding are exemplified by Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Susan G. Komen For the Cure, two of the top charities in the U.S. (Forbes, 2012). Planned Parenthood, ranked 43, received 45% (\$542.4 million) of its 2012 annual revenue from “government health services grants and reimbursements,” (Planned Parenthood, 2012a) with the remaining funds provided by private donors. Susan G. Komen, ranked 40, receives significant donations from corporate sponsors such as American Airlines, Bank of America, Caterpillar, Ford, and Yoplait, to name some of the largest. These donors have each committed over \$1 million annually to the charity (Susan G. Komen, 2013). SGK’s annual report did not separate corporate donations from individual donations; therefore, it was not possible to determine the overall percentage of revenue provided by corporate donors.

Considering the maintenance of a favorable public image is a public relations program’s primary goal, supporting SGK seems a politically safe “corporate social responsibility” strategy, as no one wants his or her mother, sister, daughter, or wife to die of breast cancer. Conversely,

Planned Parenthood did not list any corporate sponsors in their organizational materials, presumably due to the controversial nature of their services. Founded in 1942 as a “national birth control organization” (Gordon, 2002, p. 242) Planned Parenthood distributed information about birth control when it was illegal to do so. Originally the American Birth Control League, the name ‘Planned Parenthood,’ “was chosen by a public relations consultant, D. Kenneth Rose...one of the arguments for the new name was that it connoted a positive program, unlike the negativism implicit in ‘birth control,’” (p. 244).

In 1970, Planned Parenthood of Syracuse New York became the first affiliate to offer abortion services (Planned Parenthood, 2013). Today, Planned Parenthood continues as a reproductive health services provider primarily offering testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases (41% of services) and contraception (32%), (Planned Parenthood, 2012). Abortion services comprise 3%, and cancer screening and prevention is 12%.

Amid concerns of overpopulation, Title X of the Public Health Service Act was passed in 1970 creating a “comprehensive federal program to provide family planning services on a national basis,” (Gordon, 2002, p. 289). Richard Nixon declared, “no American woman should be denied access to family planning assistance because of her economic condition,” (as cited by Gordon, p. 289).

It is under the Title X provision that Planned Parenthood receives its government grants. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Population Affairs, the Title X program “funds a network of 4,400 family planning centers which serve about five million clients a year,” providing “a broad range of FDA-approved contraceptive methods and related counseling; as well as breast and cervical cancer screening; pregnancy testing and counseling; screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs); HIV testing; and

other patient education and referrals,” (2013). Prior to 1977, “approximately 295,000 women per year had abortions paid for by Medicaid,” (Gordon, 2002, p. 312).

In 1977, and every year since, a series of amendments, known as the Hyde amendments, have been attached to “appropriations bills for the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services,” restricting the use of Medicaid funds for abortions only in cases “of extreme danger to a woman’s life,” (Gordon, 2002, p. 312). Consequently, Planned Parenthood cannot use Title X funds to provide abortion services. According to Gordon, “no one issue dramatizes the basic cultural/political fissures in the United States at this time more than abortion does,” (p. 320).

### **The Controversy**

SGK notified Planned Parenthood in December 2011 that it had “implemented more stringent eligibility standards” (Susan G. Komen for the Cure, 2012, ¶ 3) for grant recipients and, as a result, Planned Parenthood would no longer be eligible for SGK grants (Crary, 2012). The new criteria barred any organizations “under investigation by local, state or federal authorities” (¶ 8) from applying for SGK grants. As Planned Parenthood was the subject of a Congressional investigation led by Rep. Cliff Stearns, R-Fla, (Crary), Planned Parenthood would be ineligible until the investigation was resolved. According to SGK, “we regret that these new policies have impacted some longstanding grantees, such as Planned Parenthood, but want to be absolutely clear that our grant-making decisions are not about politics,” (¶ 5). Planned Parenthood reported that SGK grants “totaled roughly \$680,000,” (as cited in Crary, ¶ 7) in the previous year.

According to Camino Public Relations (n.d.), Planned Parenthood’s crisis communications firm, “Planned Parenthood embraced a strategy to leverage the situation to change the public conversation about women’s health and significantly expand awareness of the

organization's life-saving cancer prevention services," (§ 3). Camino focused on four tactics: "controlled media engagement, empowering messaging, relatable personal stories, and engagement of third-party validators," (§ 9). "Within minutes of the story breaking, Planned Parenthood launched a conversation with its six million supporters through a new breast health landing page on its website, e-alerts and social media outreach," (§ 10).

On January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 at 12:52 pm, Planned Parenthood (@PPact) tweeted, "ALERT: Susan G. Komen caves under anti-choice pressure, ends funding for breast cancer screenings at PP health centers." The message was retweeted 530 times. The Associated Press (@AP) issued a tweet promoting Crary's AP story at 1:36 pm. It was retweeted 126 times. Crary used the narrative frame, "amid abortion debate," however, neither Planned Parenthood nor SGK, linked the story to abortion. Planned Parenthood used terms such as "anti-choice pressure" (Twitter) and SGK steadfastly repeated that the revised grant award procedures were not targeted toward Planned Parenthood.

In addition to the abortion debate frame, Crary's AP story described the issue as "a bitter rift...between two iconic organizations that have assisted millions of women," (§ 1). Certainly, SGK and Planned Parenthood, as being the two largest charities focused nearly exclusively on women, could rightly be labeled iconic, but neither group, directly expressed any animosity toward the other. SGK spokeswoman, Leslie Aun, affirmed, "We want to maintain a positive relationship with them...we're not making any judgment," (Crary, § 31) and Planned Parenthood "expressed deep disappointment," (Planned Parenthood, 2012b, § 1).

The news traveled through the Twitter platform. According to Dahlgren (2005), each post is both an individual interaction directed at personal networks and a form of mass communication broadcasted to an audience. An individual's response to a message is influenced

by the “existing network of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and personal experiences,” (Willnat, 1997, p. 52), and “conversations with friends, work partners, and other interpersonal networks,” (Ball-Rokeach, 1985, p. 502-503). Additionally, a story or agenda that is repeated across time and news contexts infers a sense of urgency. Wanta (1997) argues that a story must be repeated, “before it can fully influence an individual,” (p. 147). Therefore, “people often find themselves talking about issues and events that reach ephemeral ‘star’ content status,” (Ball-Rokeach, p. 503).

Certainly, the SGK story reached “star” status. In the first 10 hours, following Planned Parenthood’s first tweet, 17,326 tweets (Topsy.com) had been published, with Twitter users such as Think Progress, US Just, Slate, Daily Kos, National Public Radio and the Washington Post having reported the news. Think Progress was an opinion leader with its tweet being retweeted 3,019 times and US Just was second with 1,313 retweets. Facebook users began to post messages on SGK’s Facebook page, averaging 201 posts an hour, between 5:00 pm and 11:59 pm.

The digital environment offers specialized communication spaces speaking to “relatively narrow publics,” (Dayan, 2009, p. 24) segregated by “political orientation and interests, gender, ethnicity, cultural capital, and geography,” (Dahlgren, 2005, p. 152). For example, the *Daily Kos* is “the largest progressive community blog in the United States,” (*Daily Kos*, 2013) with an audience of 2.5 million unique visitors each month. According to *Daily Kos*, the site “is at once a news organization, community and activist hub” and offers a platform for “hundreds of thousands of regular Americans” to “shape a political world once the exclusive domain of the rich, connected and powerful,” (About *Daily Kos*).

Raeburn (2012) argues that for controversial topics, blogs “are an essential complement to the mainstream media,” (¶ 1). Whereas the AP story attempted to maintain a veneer of

neutrality, the bloggers' had the "freedom to express their opinions, speculate, and explicate," (Raeburn, ¶ 5). Consequently, the affective narrative of the story was intensified by blog coverage. Dahlgren theorizes that these specialized spaces may provide opportunities for groups to "work out internal issues and/or cultivate a collective identity," (p. 152).

In the case of SGK and Planned Parenthood, the collective identity of "being for women" was being challenged and debated. As two "iconic" women's organizations, is SGK obligated to provide funding for services at Planned Parenthood? One Facebook user posted the following message on the SGK Facebook page,

Truly a disgusting decision to defund an organization that saves lives. You have chosen to kill poor women who are actual people not potential people. How morally bankrupt. SKG [sic] is foul and immoral and will NEVER get a penny of my money. (post #9041).

According to Camino Public Relations (n.d.), Planned Parenthood had "an estimated gross exposure of more than 700 million Twitter conversations...correlating with a significant spike in donations," (¶ 16). "Planned Parenthood's breast health work received more than three million dollars in donations within four days," (¶ 18). On February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, SGK reversed their decision regarding Planned Parenthood's grant eligibility with the statement, "we want to apologize to the American public for recent decisions that cast doubt upon our commitment to our mission of saving women's lives," (CNN, 2012, ¶ 2).

## Method

### Sample

#### Media.

An article on the *Forbes* web page, time-stamped at 1:00 pm, declared that "overnight, it seems, Susan G. Komen has become public enemy number one for women on the web,"

(Casserly, 2012). Therefore, the media sample was drawn from articles published between January 31<sup>st</sup> and 12 pm on February 1, 2012, thus, generating a sample size of 59 media articles.

A search for media stories was conducted using the Lexis-Nexis database. Internet news sites were included such as RedState.com, a “singular hub of conservative grassroots collaboration,” (About Us, 2013), however, blogs that represented the opinions of a sole contributor were excluded. Additionally, transcripts of broadcast media were included as were legacy newspaper brands and their digital formats.

### **Facebook Posts**

A random sample of messages posted by users on Susan G. Komen’s Facebook page was selected for analysis. Beginning on the afternoon of January 31 and continuing until midnight on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 9,292 messages were posted. Although the controversy continued for 5 days, when SGK reversed their decision, I argue that the first 24 hours of messages is of sufficient quantity and proximity to demonstrate the influence of cultural values on stakeholders’ perceptions of SGK’s action. All Facebook posts were assigned a record number from 1 to 9,292 with 1 being assigned to the earliest post. To determine the necessary sample size, the following formula for estimating sample sizes for proportions, with a correction for finite populations and a tolerated error at preferred confidence interval of .05 was used:

$$n = \frac{N (p (1-p)) (z_{\alpha/2})^2}{(N - 1) e^2 + (p (1-p)) (z_{\alpha/2})^2}$$

Therefore n=369.

The website Random.org was used to generate random integers. As it does not exclude a number once drawn, 389 integers were drawn to ensure a minimum sample of 369. As a result, the final sample size was 381.

## **Procedure**

The Facebook posts were carefully read, and major objects and attributes were extracted. During the process of coding the media stories, it was necessary to add one additional attribute to the codebook, “debate” as an attribute of the object “abortion.” The media articles, repeating elements of the Associated Press story, frequently positioned the story “amid the abortion debate,” whereas the Facebook posts did not use the word “debate.” If abortion was mentioned, the post represented either a pro-life or a pro-choice position.

## **Results**

The most common object in the media stories was the “political climate,” with 56 media stories (93.3%) containing either a reference to “pressure from conservatives” and/or the investigation of Planned Parenthood’s practices initiated by Rep. Cliff Stearns, R-Fla. The second most common object was a “political decision” (71.1%), a frame that positioned SGK’s decision as a defensive move to counter ongoing criticism regarding their affiliation with Planned Parenthood. However, these objects were not repeated, with the same frequency in the Facebook posts.

In addition, the media represented Planned Parenthood as a “healthcare provider” (49.1%) and as supportive “of women” (40.7%). Although Planned Parenthood’s public statements were focused on their role as a healthcare provider and avoided the word “abortion,” 40.7% of the media articles referred to Planned Parenthood as the nation’s largest provider of abortions. Conservative blogs used more inflammatory words such as: “abortion giant,” “abortion mega-provider,” and “nation’s biggest abortion chain.”

The most common object in the Facebook posts was the “Komen decision” (79%); of the posts that expressed an opinion, the majority expressed dissatisfaction with SGK’s decision

(76%). The object “political decision” was the second most common object (24.7%). Additional attributes that appeared in the Facebook posts were: pro-Komen decision, pro-life, not a political decision, and mention of SGK’s corporate sponsors. Eight percent of the posts referred to SGK’s corporate sponsors, either requesting that fellow Facebook users boycott or support the sponsors depending upon their position on Komen’s decision. Several posts listed the corporate sponsors by name in their posts. Although a systematic review of SGK’s corporate sponsors Facebook pages was not conducted, this researcher did note that Yoplait was driven to post a message on their Facebook page regarding the Komen controversy.

### **Discussion**

SGK invested \$93 million in “local community programs” in 2011 (Susan G. Komen, 2012) in comparison to the \$680,000 received by Planned Parenthood in the same period. The likelihood that any SGK donor is aware, and thinks about, where SGK invests their donations is small. Consequently, it is unlikely that SGK donors were supporting the organization because of their grants to Planned Parenthood. However, the politicized issues surrounding Planned Parenthood caused some pro-life groups to be aware of the relationship and actively boycott SGK. A small percentage of Facebook posters (6%) referenced that they had actively avoided contributing to SGK in the past because of the funding relationship with Planned Parenthood. The remaining posts did not refer to previous knowledge of Planned Parenthood’s position as a grant recipient. The network environment of Planned Parenthood, the Associated Press, traditional media, bloggers and social media users placed the issue in the forefront of the public’s mind, causing them to deliver a verdict against SGK.

The strength of the reaction to the affective component in the media narrative, i.e. “halts its partnerships...causing a bitter rift,” (Crary, 2012, ¶ 1) demonstrates the salience of the issue.

Although SGK and Planned Parenthood both sought to position the issue as a women's health issue, the abortion debate remained an element of the story as the Congressional investigation of Planned Parenthood, the purpose of which was to determine if Planned Parenthood had used federal funds to pay for abortions, was the reasoning SGK provided for the change in Planned Parenthood's eligibility.

The abortion debate remains highly salient because the underlying value systems of pro-life versus pro-choice groups are irreconcilable (Railsback, 1982). Pro-life groups refer to a value system of an impeachable external authority, "revealed by the church, and erected to guide the individual to act for the good of society," whereas pro-choice groups refer to a "utilitarian or humanist ethic, which sees value as relative to situations...determined by individual conscience," (Railsback, p. 18). If Railsback is correct, SGK cannot avoid the political debate regarding women's reproductive rights.

Organizations carefully cultivate their brand; in spite of that, publics view the brand through the lens of their understanding of the organization. In the SGK scenario, donors perceived the Planned Parenthood decision as betraying SGK's mission of being "for women." Had SGK been able to anticipate the public's reaction to their new granting criteria, they might have handled the issue differently. A better understanding of the connections between cultural values and brand values could offer strategic communications professionals a method for anticipating the salience of an issue.

## Appendix

## “Cancer charity halts grants to Planned Parenthood”

David Crary, AP National Writer

January 31, 2012 11:59 PM GMT

The nation's leading breast-cancer charity, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, is halting its partnerships with Planned Parenthood affiliates creating a bitter rift, linked to the abortion debate, between two iconic organizations that have assisted millions of women.

The change will mean a cutoff of hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants, mainly for breast exams.

Planned Parenthood says the move results from Komen bowing to pressure from anti-abortion activists. Komen says the key reason is that Planned Parenthood is under investigation in Congress a probe launched by a conservative Republican who was urged to act by anti-abortion groups.

The rupture, which has not been publicly announced as it unfolded, is wrenching for some of those who've learned about it and admire both organizations.

"We're kind of reeling," said Patrick Hurd, who is CEO of Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Virginia recipient of a 2010 grant from Komen and whose wife, Betsi, is a veteran of several Komen fundraising races and is currently battling breast cancer.

"It sounds almost trite, going through this with Betsi, but cancer doesn't care if you're pro-choice, anti-choice, progressive, conservative," Hurd said. "Victims of cancer could care less about people's politics."

Planned Parenthood said the Komen grants totaled roughly \$680,000 last year and \$580,000 the year before, going to at least 19 of its affiliates for breast-cancer screening and other breast-health services.

Komen spokeswoman Leslie Aun said the cutoff results from the charity's newly adopted criteria barring grants to organizations that are under investigation by local, state or federal authorities. According to Komen, this applies to Planned Parenthood because it's the focus of an inquiry launched by Rep. Cliff Stearns, R-Fla., seeking to determine whether public money was improperly spent on abortions.

Cecile Richards, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, has depicted Stearns' probe as politically motivated and said she was dismayed that it had contributed to Komen's decision to halt the grants to PPFA affiliates.

"It's hard to understand how an organization with whom we share a mission of saving women's lives could have bowed to this kind of bullying," Richards told The Associated Press. "It's really hurtful."

Reaction to the news was swift and passionate. On Twitter, it was one of the most discussed topics Tuesday evening, with some tweets praising Komen's decision and others angrily vowing never to give to it again.

Two Democrats in Congress Sen. Patty Murray of Washington and Rep. Michael Honda of California issued statements denouncing Komen's action.

"I am stunned and saddened," said Honda, whose longtime chief of staff, Jennifer VanderHeide, had breast cancer last year. "I call on Komen to reconsider this decision, stand strong in the face of political pressure and do the right thing for the health of millions of women everywhere."

Anti-abortion groups, in contrast, welcomed the news. The Alliance Defense Fund praised Komen "for seeing the contradiction between its lifesaving work and its relationship with an abortionist that has ended millions of lives."

A statement issued Tuesday evening by Komen made no reference to the vehement

reactions, instead citing its new grant-making criteria and pledging to ensure there were no gaps in service to women.

"While it is regrettable when changes in priorities and policies affect any of our grantees, such as a long-standing partner like Planned Parenthood, we must continue to evolve to best meet the needs of the women we serve and most fully advance our mission," the statement said.

Planned Parenthood has been a perennial target of protests, boycotts and funding cutoffs because of its role as the largest provider of abortions in the United States. Its nearly 800 health centers nationwide provide an array of other services, including birth control, testing for sexually transmitted diseases, and cancer screening.

According to Planned Parenthood, its centers performed more than 4 million breast exams over the past five years, including nearly 170,000 as a result of Komen grants.

Komen, founded in 1982, has invested more than \$1.9 billion since then in breast-cancer research, health services and advocacy. Its Race for the Cure fundraising events have become a global phenomenon.

For all its mainstream popularity, however, Komen has been a target of anti-abortion groups since it began its partnerships with Planned Parenthood in 2005.

Life Decisions International includes Komen on its "boycott list" of companies and organizations that support or collaborate with Planned Parenthood. In December, Lifeway Christian Resources, the publishing division of the Southern Baptist Convention announced a recall of pink Bibles it had sold because some of the money generated for Komen was being routed to Planned Parenthood.

Aun, the Komen spokeswoman, said such pressure tactics were not the reason for the funding cutoff and cited Stearns' House investigation as a key factor.

That investigation, which has no set timetable, was launched in September when Stearns asked Planned Parenthood for more than a decade's worth of documents.

Stearns, in a statement emailed to the AP on Monday, said he is still working with Planned Parenthood on getting the requested documents. He said he is looking into possible violations of state and local reporting requirements, as well as allegations of financial abuse, and would consider holding a hearing depending on what he learns.

Many of the allegations were outlined in a report presented to Stearns last year by Americans United for Life, a national anti-abortion group, which urged him to investigate.

Democrats and Planned Parenthood supporters have assailed the probe as an unwarranted political ploy.

Komen, while not publicly announcing its decision to halt the grants, has conveyed the news to its 100-plus U.S. affiliates. Richards said she was informed via a phone call from Komen's president, Elizabeth Thompson, in December.

"It was incredibly surprising," Richards said. "It wasn't even a conversation it was an announcement."

Richards subsequently sent a letter to Komen's top leaders CEO Nancy Brinker and board chairman Dr. LaSalle D. Leffall, Jr. requesting a meeting with the board and asserting that Komen had misrepresented Planned Parenthood's funding-eligibility status in some states.

According to Planned Parenthood, the Komen leaders replied to Richards with a brief letter ignoring the request for a meeting, defending the new grant criteria, and adding, "We understand the disappointment of any organization that is affected by these policy and strategy updates."

Aun, in a telephone interview, said Komen was not accusing Planned Parenthood of any

wrongdoing.

"We want to maintain a positive relationship with them," she said. "We're not making any judgment."

Richards said Planned Parenthood is intent on raising funds quickly to replace the lost grants so that women in need do not go without breast-screening services. Already, the family foundation of Dallas oilman/philanthropist Lee Fikes and his wife, Amy, has donated \$250,000 for this purpose, Planned Parenthood said.

The Komen decision was perplexing to Dottie Lamm, a Denver newspaper columnist and breast cancer survivor. She has done fundraising for Planned Parenthood, participated in several Races for the Cure, and serves on an honorary advisory council for the local Komen affiliate.

"It really makes me sad," said Lamm, wife of former Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm. "I kind of suspect there's a political agenda that got to Komen ... I hope it can be worked out."

Stephanie Kight, a vice president with Planned Parenthood of Orange and San Bernardino Counties, said her affiliate in Southern California received a Komen grant for 2011 and was able to obtain an additional grant of \$120,000 for 2012 by signing the deal with its local Komen counterpart just before Komen's new criteria took effect. Under the criteria, no further grants will be allowed unless the pending House inquiry is resolved in Planned Parenthood's favor.

Kight said her conversations with local Komen leaders indicated there was a shared sense of frustration over the national Komen decision.

"One of the things these organizations share is the trust of women across the United States," Kight said. "That's what we're concerned about not losing the trust of these women, who turn to both of us at their most difficult moments."

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