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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press Statement

FROM: Peter B. Brownlie
President / CEO

DATE: Friday, May 1, 2009

RE: **Planned Parenthood Responds to Allegations Made by Senator Huelskamp**

We appreciate Senator Huelskamp & Representative Kinzer releasing this information, confirming that our staff followed Kansas law in responding to a phone request for information and services. Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri provides high quality, compassionate care for adolescents, and we follow all laws.

We don't appreciate, however, that these two legislators, both extremists opposed to abortion under any circumstance, have made inflammatory statements fully intended to mislead both the public and their legislative colleagues about Kansas reporting requirements.

Assessments of possible child or sexual abuse are made by trained medical professionals who are mandated reporters under Kansas law. Staff who answer phones and make appointments are not mandated reporters nor are they trained to assess child abuse. In fact, if there is possible abuse, it is in the young person's interest that she see a licensed medical professional who can assess the situation and determine the best course of action for that child. Staff are trained to encourage young people to come in to our health center so a licensed professional can make an informed, in-person assessment of their needs.

Sen Huelskamp & Rep Kinzer should know that Kansas law does not require a suspected abuse report based solely on the reported age of the parties. In fact, the law requires that a mandated reporter make a case by case assessment of possible injury in each situation. Huelskamp & Kinzer are being disingenuous at best and dishonest at worst by claiming otherwise.

This is blatant political game-playing in the closing days of the legislative session, played by legislators who apparently believe accomplishing their political agenda is more important than being honest and straightforward with their colleagues and the public. Kansans deserve better.

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Planned Parenthood is a vital resource for our community and for women and families throughout Kansas and Missouri. We are a trusted source of health care and education for thousands of women, men, and children. For more than 70 years, women have relied on Planned Parenthood to keep themselves and their families safe and healthy.