

Komen drops plans to cut Planned Parenthood grants

February 3 2012, By DAVID CRARY , AP National Writer

(AP) -- The Susan G. Komen for the Cure breast-cancer charity on Friday abandoned plans to eliminate grants to Planned Parenthood. The startling decision came after three days of virulent criticism that resounded across the Internet, jeopardizing Komen's iconic image.

"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," a Komen statement said.

As first reported by The Associated Press on Tuesday, Komen had adopted criteria excluding [Planned Parenthood](#) from future grants for breast-cancer screenings because it was under government investigation, citing a probe launched by a Florida congressman at the urging of anti-abortion groups.

Komen said it would change the criteria "to make clear that disqualifying investigations must be criminal and conclusive in nature and not political."

"We will continue to fund existing grants, including those of Planned Parenthood, and preserve their eligibility to apply for future grants," the statement said.

Many of Komen's affiliates across the country had openly rebelled against the decision to cut the funding, which totaled \$680,000 in 2011. One affiliate, in [Aspen](#), Colo., had announced Thursday that it would

defy the new rules and continue grants to its local Planned Parenthood partner.

In addition, Komen was inundated with [negative comments](#) via emails, on [Twitter](#) and on its Facebook page. Many of the messages conveyed a determination to halt gifts to Komen - organizer of the popular Race for the Cure events -because of the decision.

Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood was reporting an outpouring of support - donations large and small, triggered by the Komen decision, that it said surpassed \$900,000.

Planned Parenthood's president, Cecile Richards, thanked those donors Friday and welcomed Komen's change of heart.

"We are enormously grateful that the Komen Foundation has clarified its grantmaking criteria," Richards said. "What these past few days have demonstrated is the deep resolve all Americans share in the fight against cancer."

Through the Komen grants, Planned Parenthood says its health centers provided nearly 170,000 clinical breast exams and more than 6,400 mammogram referrals over the past five years.

Komen, in its statement, said it was immediately starting an outreach to its affiliates and supporters to get the charity back on track.

"We urge everyone who has participated in this conversation across the country over the last few days to help us move past this issue," Komen said. "We do not want our mission marred or affected by politics - anyone's politics."

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