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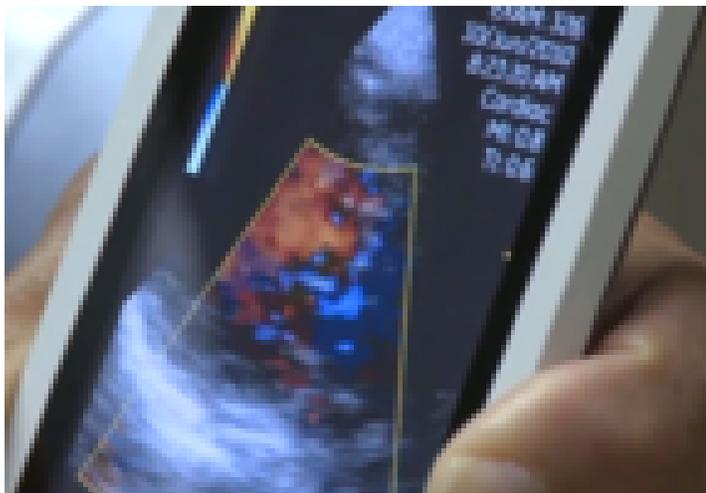
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South Bend abortion clinic to open any day now, clinic leaders say

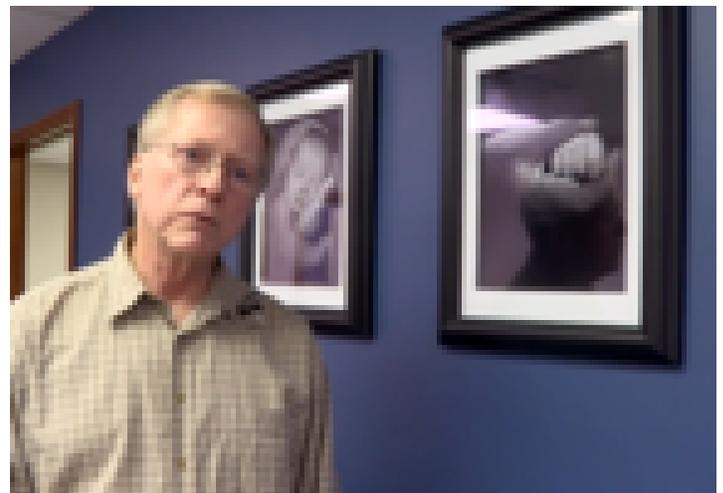
by Jessi Schultz, WSBT 22 Reporter
Monday, October 30th 2017



South Bend abortion clinic to open soon. // WSBT 22 Photo



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SOUTH BEND — An abortion clinic could soon be open in South Bend.

Whole Woman's Health is renovating a facility on Lincolnway West.

It says the clinic will open any day now.

It's been nearly two years since the city has had an abortion clinic.

The Women's Pavilion in South Bend stopped operating abortions in 2015.

Since then, women who wanted an abortion had to travel to Merilville or Fort Wayne.

Leaders from Whole Woman's Health say that's a big reason they wanted to open one in South Bend.

The color of the leaves isn't the only thing changing in South Bend.

Inside the walls of this building, contractors are hard at work transforming it into Whole Woman's Health Clinic.

A clinic dedicated to providing abortions for women who want them.

Leaders from the non-profit group say they chose South Bend for a reason.

"The community hasn't had a provider for the last two years and we really believe that deserve this care shouldn't have to face the hurdles of driving to another community," said Sharon Lau, director of Clinical Services for Whole Woman's Health.

In 2015, the only abortion clinic in South Bend closed.

For Tom Gill, president of the St. Joseph County Right to Life, that day was a win for him.

He says since then the number of abortions in St. Joseph County has significantly decreased.

"More than ever, abortion is not needed in this community and I think the reason is that women have discovered now that they haven't been pressured to have abortions locally in the last two years that there are tremendous resources here in town," said Gill.

The clinic also wants to provide resources for women.

"We need to shift the stigma around abortion care so that women feel that they deserve and can get compassionate and high quality care," said Lau.

Gill says despite the clinic coming to South Bend, their mission remains the same.

"We're going to do everything in our power to continue to try and educate women and make them aware of the things that are available here, the resources they have and the options they have," said Gill.

Leaders at Whole Woman's Health say they're confident they can provide care for every woman in the area that wants it.

"We know that 1 in 4 women will have an abortion in her lifetime and so abortion care is health care," said Lau.

Again, the clinic is waiting to get a license from the Indiana Health Department.

Whole Woman's Health also just opened a clinic in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Leaders say they chose that location because of the state's restrictive abortion laws.

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