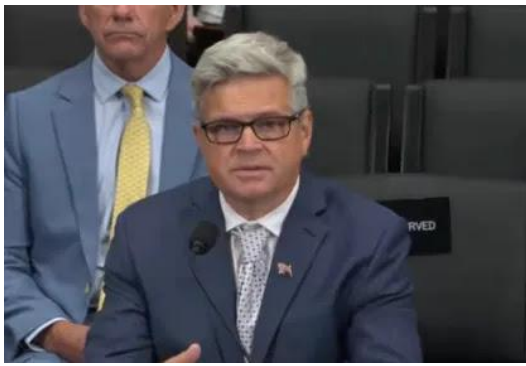




Miami birth tourism boss suddenly has nothing to say

The founder of a Miami company that helps foreign nationals give birth in the United States repeatedly invoked the Fifth Amendment on Capitol Hill as lawmakers pressed him over the booming birth-tourism industry.

Dr. Wladimir Lorentz, founder and chief medical officer of Have My Baby in Miami, appeared before a House Oversight Committee panel examining companies that arrange U.S. births for foreign clients. Rather than answer questions about his business, Lorentz told lawmakers that a pending federal investigation left him unwilling to testify about the matter.

“On the advice of counsel, I will respectfully decline to answer any questions touching the subject matter of a pending federal investigation on the grounds that a truthful answer may tend to incriminate me,” Lorentz [told](#) Rep. Brandon Gill (R-TX), who chairs the Task Force on Defending Constitutional Rights and Exposing Institutional Abuses.

Lorentz also cautioned lawmakers not to interpret his refusal to answer questions as an admission of wrongdoing.

“Nothing in my appearance here today and nothing in my declining to answer questions should be understood as a concession on the merits of the ongoing investigation,” he said.

Gill launched a congressional investigation into several birth-tourism businesses in May, with Have My Baby in Miami among the companies in his sights.

The Texas Republican has argued that such businesses exploit U.S. immigration and citizenship laws by helping foreign nationals enter the country temporarily, give birth on American soil and then return home with a child who holds U.S. citizenship.

“Have My Baby in Miami — that’s the name of an actual company that is facilitating birth tourism into the United States, where foreigners come in on visas, have children, then leave so that their children can remain American citizens,” Gill said when announcing the probe.

“That’s a problem. The American people are sick of it, and my task force on the House Oversight Committee is going after these companies.”

Birth tourism has drawn scrutiny for years because children born in the United States generally receive citizenship under the prevailing interpretation of the 14th Amendment, regardless of whether their parents are citizens or permanent residents.

One estimate cited by Breitbart places the number of children born annually through birth tourism at roughly 33,000. In many cases, the parents enter the United States on temporary visas, including tourist visas, before returning to their home countries after the birth.

Once those U.S.-born children reach adulthood, they can potentially petition for certain family members, including their parents, to obtain lawful permanent residency.

Federal authorities have previously pursued major birth-tourism operations across the country, including schemes involving Chinese nationals in California. A 2019 Justice Department investigation targeted operators accused of helping thousands of Chinese clients travel to the United States specifically to give birth.

The practice has also been reported among Russian nationals in Florida, Turkish nationals in New York and clients from Middle Eastern countries in Illinois.

The issue has received renewed attention from conservatives who argue that the industry has transformed U.S. citizenship into a commodity for wealthy foreigners willing to pay agencies to navigate visas, housing and medical care.

Author Peter Schweizer has also claimed that more than 100 Chinese-owned agencies in California offer services connected to U.S. births for Chinese clients.

For Gill and other Republicans examining the industry, Lorentz's appearance offered few answers about how Have My Baby in Miami operates.

The company's top executive instead spent the hearing making one point clear: with federal investigators already looking into the business, he was not prepared to say anything that could be used against him.