

News and Current Events :: Obama Administration Forces California Churches to Pay for Abortions

Obama Administration Forces California Churches to Pay for Abortions, on: 2016/6/22 14:20

Churches in California are officially subject to an onerous state regulation that requires them to pay for abortions, thanks to a ruling by the Obama administration.

The troubling situation began in 2014 when the California Department of Managed Health Care reclassified abortion as a "basic health service" under the Affordable Care Act and ordered all insurance plans in the state to begin covering surgical abortions immediately. Even churches are not exempt from funding abortions.

The churches filed a lawsuit against the regulation last October, and it has been moving through the courts.

They also asked the Obama administration to uphold the Weldon Amendment "federal law that protects conscience rights. But, today, the HHS Office of Civil Rights released the results of its investigation into the California abortion mandate, stating it found no violation and is closing its investigation of the complaints without further action.

OCR's decision is based on a flawed reading of the Weldon amendment. They argue that the Weldon amendment only protects health insurance plans, and not the purchasers of such plans, and state that the insurance companies have not complained. To say that a previously existing plan that excluded abortion must be discontinued is discriminatory against the life-affirming abortion-free plan. Whether the insurance company objects or not, the mandate is discriminatory.

Furthermore, OCR states that the insurance companies do not hold a religious or moral objection to covering abortion. The Weldon amendment is not limited to religious or moral objections. It is not even based on an objection being raised. It simply states no funds may be made available to a government that subjects a health care entity (health plan in this case) to discrimination on the basis that the entity "does not provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortion."

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Pro-life leaders in Congress are furious with the Obama administration.

"Nearly two years after California imposed its draconian mandate that requires all insurance companies to pay for abortion the Obama Administration has reached a new low" reinterpreting the Weldon amendment to allow the mandate to continue," said Rep. Chris Smith, Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Pro-Life Caucus in comments to LifeNews.com. "This means that Californians, including churches, will continue to be forced to pay for elective abortions in their insurance plans."

Smith continued, "The Weldon amendment" named for the Florida Congressman Dave Weldon who authored it "has been renewed and signed into law annually, including by President Obama. The Weldon Amendment protects against state-imposed abortion mandates. But Obama's Administration has again shown blatant disregard for the rule of law. This decision illustrates the far reaches of Obama's radical pro-abortion ideology" forcing churches and communities of faith that have pro-life convictions to participate in and pay for a practice that dismembers and chemically poisons unborn children.

"Congress must not let this discrimination stand. We must take this issue out of the hands of the Obama Administration by moving enforcement of current conscience protections to the courts. Congress needs to enact legislation so churches and other victims have a "private right of action" so they can have their day in court."

Alliance Defending Freedom Senior Counsel Casey Mattox also commented on the Obama administration's decision in an email to LifeNews. he said:

"The Obama Administration is once again making a mockery of the law, and this time in the most unimaginable way. Churches should never be forced to cover elective abortion in their insurance plans, and for ten years the Weldon Amendment has protected the right to have plans that do not include coverage for abortion-on-demand. But the state of Califor

nia has ordered every insurer, even those insuring churches, to cover elective abortions in blatant violation of the law. The Obama Administration's refusal to enforce this law continues its pattern of enforcing laws it wants to enforce, refusing to enforce others, and inventing new interpretations of others out of whole cloth. We will continue to defend churches from this clear violation of the First Amendment and federal law and call on Congress to hold the Department of Health and Human Services accountable.

Alliance Defending Freedom, which is representing three churches in the case Foothill Church v. Rouillard, will ask a federal court to allow the lawsuit against California to proceed.

The lawsuit is on behalf of Foothill Church in Glendora, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills in Chino, and The Shepherd of the Hills Church in Porter Ranch, according to ADF. In 2014, ADF and Life Legal Defense Foundation filed formal complaints with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services against DMHC regarding California's mandate and its violation of federal conscience law. Those came on the heels of a complaint filed directly with DMHC, which responded by affirming its decision to force all plans to cover all abortions without any explanation as to how that decision squares with the Constitution and contrasting federal law.

<http://www.lifenews.com/2016/06/21/obama-administration-forces-california-churches-to-pay-for-abortions/>

Re: Obama Administration Forces California Churches to Pay for Abortions - posted by followthelamb (), on: 2016/6/22

"Churches in California are officially subject to an onerous state regulation that requires them to pay for abortions"

I bless the Lord that there is one church who is divinely exempt from funding abortions and that is the underground church made up of living stones.

Edit: changed quote from article to better clarify the issue.

Re: , on: 2016/6/22 16:50

That's true, it only affects those churches that have entered into contract with the state (501c3), not house churches or other non 501c3, churches.

People are realizing how insidious it is to enter their religious organisation into contract with the state. There are other things brewing for the 501c3 churches. It is going to get worse for them. They will have to make a choice between who they serve.