

AUL Calls Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Decision Upholding First Amendment Conscience Rights “a Victory for Common-sense”

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WASHINGTON, D.C. (06-30-14) – “Today’s decision is a victory for common-sense as pro-life Americans do not lose their First Amendment freedoms when they open a family business or when they value unborn life,” commented Americans United for Life President and CEO Dr. Charmaine Yoest, upon hearing news that the Court ruled in favor of the Green and Hahn families in two cases challenging Obamacare’s coercive HHS Mandate. “These cases underscore the critical need for laws protecting Americans’ freedom of conscience. The anti-life mandate the Obama Administration tried to impose on these families is evidence of Big Abortion’s manipulative agenda, as they move from choice to coercion.”

In a 5-4 decision in *Conestoga Wood Specialties v. Burwell* (formerly *Sebelius*) and *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores*, the U.S. Supreme Court held that closely held corporations (such as the Green and Hahn family businesses) cannot be required to provide “contraception” coverage. The Court held that the Obama Administration failed to show that its coercive Mandate was the least restrictive means of advancing its claimed interest.

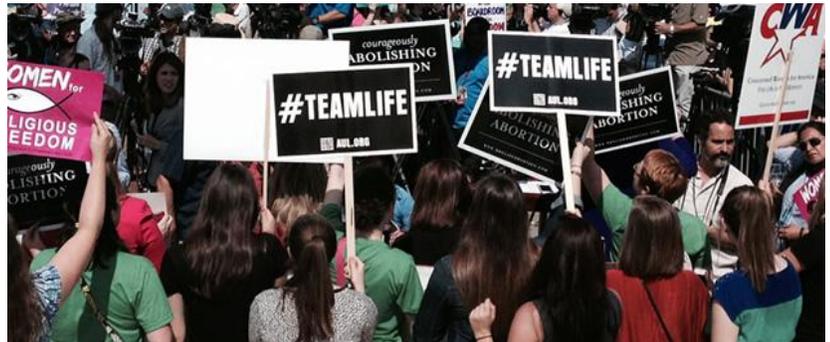
Including these cases, Americans United for Life has filed 18 *amicus curiae* briefs in challenges to Obamacare’s HHS Mandate which includes requiring employers to offer life-ending drugs and devices in health insurance policies. AUL’s briefs presented analysis and arguments defending the constitutional rights of all Americans when it comes to healthcare purchases.

Conestoga Wood Specialties is owned by Christians and operated according to the owners’ Mennonite Christian beliefs. Hobby Lobby is an Oklahoma-based national arts and crafts retailer founded and run by David Green and his family, and their Christian faith has remained an integral part of the business. Both Conestoga Wood and Hobby Lobby do not oppose all contraception, but only those drugs and devices that have been labeled as “contraception” by the FDA even though they are known to have life-ending effects.

In its briefs before the Supreme Court, AUL demonstrated that the life of a new human being begins at fertilization (conception), that so-called “emergency contraception” has a post-fertilization effect that can

prevent a new human being from implanting in the uterus, and that forcing employers to provide coverage for such drugs violates their constitutionally protected freedom of conscience.

The briefs were filed by an all-woman team of four AUL attorneys on behalf of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Christian Medical Association, National Catholic Bioethics Center, Physicians for Life, and National Association of Pro Life Nurses.



“Real healthcare respects life,” noted Dr. Yoest. “Whether the issue is punishing Americans for their beliefs, pushing life-ending drugs that have been deceptively labeled as contraception, or creating new income streams for the abortion industry, the anti-life implications of Obamacare are far reaching.”

Abortion is woven into the healthcare law at multiple levels, making repeal of the law a pro-life necessity. The abortion-related provisions of Obamacare, include:

- Failing to prohibit the use of federal tax dollars for abortion, abortion coverage, and abortion-inducing drugs and devices.
- Pretending that the Hyde Amendment protections were enough to prohibit direct payment for abortions.
- Permitting federally subsidized Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) to provide abortion coverage through the state insurance exchanges required in all 50 states.
- Failing to prohibit all multi-state qualified health plans from providing coverage for abortion.
- Including a "preventive care" mandate that is being used to force coverage of drugs and devices known to end life.

- Failing to provide comprehensive First Amendment conscience protections for individuals, employers, and insurance companies that have religious or moral objections to abortion.

Americans United for Life continues to work at the state and federal level to enact comprehensive statutory protections that guard against Big Abortion's coercive agenda.