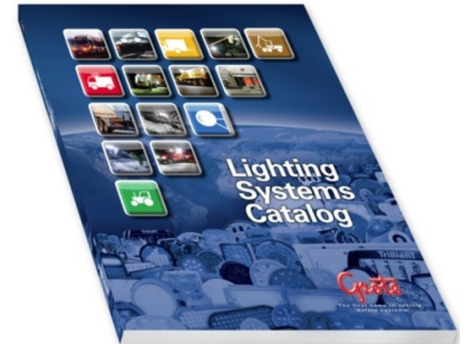




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on November 2, 2012

Auto Lighting Industry Manufacturer Sues to Stop Obama Mandate

Another private business has stepped forward to challenge President Obama's contraception mandate requiring employers to offer workers health insurance that provides free contraception, including "morning after" pills that can cause abortion. [Alliance Defending Freedom](#) (ADF), a conservative legal advocacy group, announced that it had [filed suit](#) against several federal officials and departments, including Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and her Department of Health and Human Services, on behalf of [Grote Industries](#), an Indiana-based auto industry lighting manufacturer.



"Americans should be free to honor God at work, at home, and at church," said Indianapolis attorney Mike Wilkins, who is working with ADF to represent the firm against the federal government. "They have the God-given freedom to live and do business according to their faith. Forcing them to surrender their faith in order to earn a living is unprecedented, unnecessary, and unconstitutional. The Administration's attacks on faith and business prove that it doesn't respect either one."

A family-run business founded in 1901 by William Grote, the company is a leading maker of vehicle lighting and safety systems with factories and offices in North America, Europe, and Asia. According to the company's website, the present generation of owners are practicing Catholics who continue to hold firm "to the family values and work ethics set forth by our founder all those years ago."

The suit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, explains that the Grote family "seeks to run Grote Industries in a manner that reflects their sincerely held religious beliefs" — a goal that would be severely compromised by the HHS mandate.

"The government has no business deciding what faith is, who the faithful are, and when and where their faith may be lived out," said ADF Legal Counsel Matt Bowman. "Washington politicians can't confine our faith to our homes and our churches. Honoring God is important every day, in all areas of life, including in our work. Freedom is God-given, not government-driven."

ADF has already met with success in its efforts on behalf of companies battling the mandate. On July 27, ADF attorneys won the first-ever court order against the mandate on behalf of Colorado's [Hercules Industries](#), also owned by practicing Catholics. The order temporarily suspends enforcement of the mandate in the case of Hercules Industries while the company pursues its own lawsuit to have the mandate overturned. Additionally, ADF is seeking a similar order on behalf of another firm, [Tyndale House Publishers](#), which is the world's largest independent publisher of Bibles and other Christian resources.

ADF is also involved in lawsuits against the mandate on behalf of Indiana's Grace College and Seminary and California's Biola University; Geneva College in Pennsylvania; the Seneca Hardwood Lumber Company and its owners, also in Pennsylvania; and Louisiana College, a Southern Baptist school.



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As reported by [The New American](#), in September the [Becket Fund for Religious Liberty](#) filed a complaint against the Obama mandate on behalf of Hobby Lobby, a Christian-owned retailer with 22,500 employees and more than 500 stores in 41 states. “By being required to make a choice between sacrificing our faith or paying millions of dollars in fines, we essentially must choose which poison pill to swallow,” said Hobby Lobby’s founder and CEO David Green as the suit was announced. Green is an unashamed evangelical Christian who places his Christian faith at the center of his business. He said that he and his company “simply cannot abandon our religious beliefs to comply with this mandate.” In the most recent victory against the mandate, on November 1 the [Thomas More Law Center](#) (TMLC) announced that Federal District Court Judge Robert H. Cleland of the Eastern District of Michigan had issued a preliminary injunction on behalf of its clients, Weingartz Supply Company and its owner Daniel Weingartz, halting enforcement of the mandate against the company.

“The federal court has found that our clients have a likelihood of success and would be irreparably harmed by the unconstitutional overreaching of the HHS mandate,” said TMLC lead counsel Erin Mersino. “This is not only a victory for our clients, but for religious freedom.”

In his ruling Judge Cleland emphasized that the “loss of First Amendment freedoms, for even minimal periods of time, unquestionably constitutes irreparable injury.... The harm in delaying the implementation of a statute that may later be deemed constitutional must yield to the risk presented here of substantially infringing the sincere exercise of religious beliefs. The balance of harms tips strongly in Plaintiffs’ favor.”

In a press release TMLC noted that while “several cases across the country challenging the constitutionality of the HHS mandate have been dismissed by federal courts on technical grounds, Judge Cleland is the second federal judge to grant a motion for preliminary injunction” — the ADF’s victory for Hercules Industries being the first.



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