



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on June 14, 2020

Lawsuit Charges Illinois With Violating Religious-liberty Rights

A lawsuit filed last week by the Thomas Moore Society, a non-profit public interest law firm, charged that the state of Illinois is violating its own laws by requiring all insurance policies offered for sale in the state to pay for abortion services.

There is no exemption allowed even by churches or individuals with sincerely held religious beliefs that abortion, or its facilitation through funding, is tantamount to murder or its enablement.

The state already has in place two laws that forbid the legislature from requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for elective abortions. But the Democrats who control that body and who voted en masse along party lines for the law don't care. Peter Breen, the Society's vice president and senior counsel, explained:

This forced coverage of abortion is a blatant violation of the religious and conscience rights of Illinoisans. While the secular forces behind this mandate often erroneously object to any influence of religion on the state [under the faux "Separation of Church and State" doctrine], here they had no hesitation in wielding state power against our sincerely held, common-sense religious beliefs, which compel us to avoid paying for health insurance coverage of abortion.

Breen is filing on behalf of the Illinois Baptist State Association, Southland Smiles (a dental practice), and Rock River Cartage (a transportation company), each of whom believes that the mandate illegally requires them to purchase health insurance for their employees that pays for abortions, with no exceptions or exemptions.

If all of this sounds familiar, it is. The Supreme Court ruled in 2014 that the Department of Health and Human Services mandate that coverage under ObamaCare include coverage for abortions was unconstitutional. As Breen noted,

The United States Supreme Court has repeatedly condemned this sort of government coercion against people of faith, including ... the 2014 *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.* decision.

Illinois law protects the sincerely held beliefs of our state's non-profits and businesses, but our state politicians and bureaucrats have sat silent in response to the conscientious objections of people of faith to paying for elective abortions.

The plaintiffs complain in their lawsuit, "There are no religious or moral exemptions to these requirements ... [that] the intent is clear that religious individuals and organizations are to comply with the abortion coverage mandate... [and that] they cannot facilitate access to, subsidize, or otherwise materially cooperate with the provision without violating their conscience and most sacred and solemn obligations to God, betraying their profound religious faith, and disserving the best interests of their fellow human beings."





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Further, they believe that “providing their employees with insurance coverage for abortion constitutes cooperation with intrinsic evil and violates the laws of God.”

Accordingly, the plaintiffs are asking the Seventh Circuit Court to declare the state’s Reproductive Health Act “unlawful, invalid, unenforceable, null and void, and otherwise of no force and effect ... on grounds of sincerely held religious beliefs.”

Some are hoping that the Seventh Circuit rules for the state, setting the stage of an appeal to the Supreme Court in a replay of the *Hobby Lobby* decision. But this time it is hoped that the court will emphatically rule against *Roe v. Wade*, which enabled the evil that has cost the lives of an estimated 61 million people since 1973.

As education director Dr. Randall O’Bannon of the National Right to Life Committee lamented, “Abortion has taken a terrible toll on America. We’ve now lost more than 61 million of our sons, daughters, friends, and neighbors and we are a much poorer nation for it.”

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American, writing primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelmann@thenewamerican.com.

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