

Vermont Rolls Back Law that Targets Pro-Life Pregnancy Centers

Faith-based pregnancy care centers in Vermont have successfully challenged officials over a law they say restricted their free speech and their services to women. As a result, state lawmakers have walked back on a measure and will no longer openly discriminate against the centers over their life-affirming service to their communities.

As CBN News reported, the National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (NIFLA), Aspire Now, and Branches Pregnancy Resource Center sued state officials in July 2023. They argued the state unconstitutionally restricted their speech and provision of services with a bill that was signed into law by Gov. Phil Scott.

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According to Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), a conservative non-profit legal group, the law only applied to pro-life pregnancy centers. It censored their ability to advertise services and to counsel women against abortion.

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“[It] specifically targeted pro-life pregnancy centers as ‘limited services’ providers because they do not refer for or perform abortions. Under the law, pregnancy centers could be fined up to \$10,000 for advertising their services in a way

that Vermont's pro-abortion attorney general believes is misleading," the group explained. "An abortion facility that provides identical information would not be subject to the law."

The state has now amended the language of the law to eliminate its targeting of pregnancy centers.

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"We're pleased that Vermont recognized it needed to amend its discriminatory law that unlawfully targeted faith-based pregnancy centers and restricted their ability to speak and act according to their conscience. Pregnancy centers must be free to serve and empower women and their families by offering the support they need without fear of unjust government punishment," said ADF Legal Counsel Julia Payne Koon.

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