

ACLU Wants to Force Christians to Commit Abortions Against Their Will

Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys representing several pro-life, pro-women's organizations asked a federal court Wednesday to allow the groups to intervene in defense of a Catholic hospital system that the American Civil Liberties Union sued in October. The ACLU lawsuit is asking the court to force Trinity Health and its staff to commit abortions regardless of their religious and pro-life objections.

ADF attorneys represent Catholic Medical Association, Christian Medical and Dental Association, American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Concerned Women for America, all of which could be affected by the lawsuit's outcome. Trinity Health operates 86 facilities in 21 states.

"No American should be forced to commit an abortion," said ADF Senior Counsel Kevin Theriot. "Not only is there no law that requires faith-based hospitals and medical personnel to commit such acts against their faith and conscience, federal law directly prohibits the government from engaging in any such coercion. Similarly, the government cannot tie any funding to a requirement that hospitals and health care workers give up their constitutionally protected freedoms."

"Forcing Catholic hospitals to perform abortions is not only against the law, it simply makes no sense," explained ADF Senior Legal Counsel Matt Bowman. "Patients should always have the freedom to choose a health care facility that respects life and to choose doctors who do not commit abortions. Other options exist for patients who prefer a different type of facility. Forcing health care workers to act contrary to the

very faith convictions that led them into the medical profession—to serve, help and bring healing to people—is counterproductive, unnecessary and illegal.”

“Catholic Medical, Christian Medical and AAPLOG ... seek to defend their members’ right not to be forced by the federal government to provide, assist in or refer for abortions; against their sincere religious, conscientious and ethical objections to this practice. CWA seeks to defend its members’ right to choose a health care provider that does not perform abortions,” the motion filed in *American Civil Liberties Union v. Trinity Health Corporation* with the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, explains.

The groups “bring a point of view to the litigation not presented by either the plaintiffs or the defendants ...,” the motion continues. “As associations that are dedicated to representing the interests of pro-life health care professionals and those who seek care from them, Applicants are uniquely suited to give primacy to arguments that emphasize the concerns regarding conscience.”