

Churches Fight Back Against Ungodly Demands

Alliance Defending Freedom filed a federal lawsuit Friday against the California Department of Managed Health Care for forcing churches to pay for elective abortions in their health insurance plans.

“Churches should not be forced to pay for the killing of innocent human life,” said ADF Senior Legal Counsel Erik Stanley. “The government has no right to demand that church health insurance plans contain coverage for abortion—something that violates these churches’ most sincerely held religious beliefs. California is violating the Constitution by strong-arming churches into having this coverage in their plans.”

ADF filed the lawsuit, *Foothill Church v. Rouillard*, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California on behalf of Foothill Church in Glendora, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills in Chino, and The Shepherd of the Hills Church in Porter Ranch.

Last year, ADF and Life Legal Defense Foundation filed formal complaints with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services against DMHC regarding California’s mandate and its violation of federal conscience law. Those came on the heels of a complaint filed directly with DMHC, which responded by affirming its decision to force all plans to cover all abortions without any explanation as to how that decision squares with the Constitution and contrasting federal law.

“Because Obamacare requires health insurance coverage, and the California mandate requires abortion coverage in any health plan, these churches are truly left with no way to opt out of paying for abortions,” said ADF Litigation Staff Counsel Jeremiah Galus. “What’s absurd, though, is that the same

government that rightfully does not require California churches to pay for contraceptive coverage requires them to pay for elective abortion coverage. Californians should not be forced to choose between following their deepest convictions and submitting to unlawful and unnecessary government mandates.”

“Elective abortions are not part of ‘basic health care,’” Galus continued. “They have no business being forced into the medical coverage provided by churches that do not wish to support terminating lives due to very real, sincere, and well-known faith convictions. We hope the court will require California to follow the Constitution and respect these churches’ fundamental freedoms.”

The concern of many pro-life Californians about being compelled by the government to pay for elective abortions has only been enhanced recently by the knowledge that some of those aborted children may have had their body parts sold for profit. The revelation came in authenticated videos from the California-based Center for Medical Progress that showed officials of StemExpress, a California company, and California Planned Parenthood executives discussing a scheme to harvest and sell the body parts of aborted babies.