

Judge Dismisses Suit Challenging Obama's Contraception Mandate

In a blow to religious freedom, U.S. district Judge Carol Jackson in St. Louis dismissed a claim that the HHS contraception coverage mandate violates religious freedom.

Frank O'Brien, a devout Catholic and owner of O'Brien Industrial Holdings, filed the suit in 2010. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported O'Brien's lawyer, Francis Manion, saying he thinks the ruling is "not well-supported by the law or logic."

"RFRA [Religious Freedom Restoration Act] is a shield, not a sword," the judge wrote. "It protects individuals from substantial burdens on religious exercise that occur when the government coerces action one's religion forbids, or forbids action one's religion requires; it is not a means to force one's religious practices upon others. RFRA does not protect against the slight burden on religious exercise that arises when one's money circuitously flows to support the conduct of other free-exercise-wielding individuals who hold religious beliefs that differ from one's own."

O'Brien will appeal the ruling, and pro-lifers are speaking out.

Judie Brown, president of American Life League, said Jackson's ruling is of immense concern to people fighting to protect **religious freedom** in America.

"In our great nation, liberty has always been equated with freedom of religion, freedom from oppression and **freedom of speech**. Sadly, Judge Jackson's decision begins America's regression into the dark ages. **Obamacare** laws, including this

mandate, trample the rights of citizens and ensure that our freedom is in jeopardy,” Brown says.

As she sees it, the outrageous erosion of freedom validated by Judge Jackson does not just begin or even end with religious freedom. It goes further—violating our moral conscience. The true effect of this action is but a prelude for the sad commentary on modern-day America that is yet to be told, she says.

“We must not accept this outrage. We call on Americans of every faith to loudly protest this decision. This decision must be appealed to the highest court in the land,” Brown says. “Let us **pray** that our nation will rise above this despicable decision and strive to restore true liberty to all people, born and preborn.”