

RI Gov. Under Fire for Creating Pro-Abortion Health Exchange

The ObamaCare-related lawsuits just keep coming. This one is against Rhode Island Gov. Lincoln Chafee.

The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) joined a lawsuit against Chafee, alleging he overstepped his authority by creating a health exchange for **ObamaCare** that funds **elective abortions** contrary to state law.

The amended complaint filed in the lawsuit Tuesday explains that the power to create the exchange—a set of state-approved and regulated insurance plans eligible for federal subsidies—lies solely with the people through their representatives in the General Assembly. ADF attorneys are co-counsel together with lead attorney Joe Larisa in representing Rhode Island Right to Life and 38 state legislators.

“No one should force Rhode Islanders to subsidize other people’s abortions under the guise of health-care reform, especially through illegitimate, extra-constitutional methods,” says ADF senior counsel Casey Mattox. “The governor cannot circumvent state lawmakers simply because the majority of them want to maintain longstanding prohibitions against the use of taxpayer dollars for elective abortions.”

When concerns about taxpayer-subsidized abortion coverage prevented the General Assembly from reaching agreement on an exchange last year, Chafee unilaterally created one himself without including the traditional restrictions on abortion subsidies.

“It is a fundamental principle of both American and Rhode Island constitutional law that the legislature enacts the laws

and the governor executes them,” says Larisa. “Until this order, no other governor has attempted to create a health care exchange without the legislature’s approval. Gov. Chafee is brazenly attempting to evade the state constitution and members of the General Assembly, each of whom has the constitutional right to vote on how any exchange should be created, managed, and limited.”

Rhode Island Right to Life originally filed its lawsuit, *Rhode Island State Right to Life Committee v. Chafee*, in Rhode Island Superior Court on Dec. 1 of last year after Chafee issued an executive order to create the exchange unilaterally.