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2014 - Issue 2

DEUTERONOMY 30:19

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A Pro-Life Religious Outreach Newspaper

NRLC's Carol Tobias Testifies against Radical Senate Abortion Bill

NRLC President Carol Tobias testifies before Senate Committee

WASHINGTON– Four months before the mid-term congressional election, Senate Democrats are pushing into the national spotlight "the most radical pro-abortion bill ever considered by Congress," said Carol Tobias, president of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), the federation of state right-to-life organizations. Tobias was one of two non-congressional witnesses who testified against the so-called "Women's Health Protection Act" (S. 1696), at a hearing before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee on July 15. Tobias went on to speak against this radical abortion bill on the Christian Broadcast Network as well as Eternal Word Television Network radio and EWTN Nightly News.

"This bill is really about just one thing: it seeks to strip away from elected lawmakers the ability to provide even the most minimal protections for unborn children, at any stage of their pre-natal development," Tobias told the committee. "Calling the bill the 'Abortion Without Limits Until Birth Act' would be more in line with truth-in-advertising standards."

The bill has been heavily promoted by pro-abortion activist groups since its introduction last November, although it has been largely ignored by the mainstream news media. The measure has 35 Senate cosponsors, all Democrats, including nine of the 10 Democrats on the Judiciary Committee, including it's chief sponsor, Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.).

The bill would invalidate nearly all existing state limitations on abortion, and prohibit states from adopting new limitations in the future, including various types of laws specifically upheld as constitutionally permissible by the U.S. Supreme Court. Among the laws that the bill would nullify are requirements to provide women seeking abortion with specific information on their unborn child and on alternatives to abortion, laws providing reflection periods (waiting periods), laws allowing medical professionals to opt out of providing abortions, laws limiting the performance of abortions to licensed physicians, bans on elective abortion after 20 weeks, meaningful limits on abortion after viability, and bans on the use of abortion as a method of sex selection. These laws generally have broad public support in the states in which they are enacted, including support from substantial majorities of women.

The bill would also invalidate most previously enacted federal limits on abortion, including federal conscience protection laws and most, if not all, limits on government funding of abortion.

"We believe that many voters will be appalled to learn that nearly two-thirds of Senate Democrats have cosponsored a bill to impose nationwide the extreme ideological doctrine that elective abortion must not be limited in any meaningful way, at any stage of pregnancy," Tobias said.

In her testimony, Tobias also issued a surprising challenge, calling on the leadership of the Democrat-controlled committee, and the Democrat leadership of the full Senate, to allow a floor vote on the bill – but at the same time, to allow a vote on the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (S. 1670), sponsored by Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) "In the spirit of 'pro-choice,' why not give the Senate a choice as well?," Tobias said to Blumenthal.

"We challenge you, and the leadership of the majority party, to allow the American people to see where every senator stands on both of these major abortion-related bills," Tobias said. "Let the American people see which bill reflects the values of each member of the United States Senate."

The Graham bill, which has 41 Senate cosponsors, duplicates legislation that has already passed the House of Representatives (H.R. 1797). The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act would generally protect unborn children in the sixth month and later (20 weeks), by which point they are capable of experiencing great pain during abortions.

Hobby Lobby Wins HHS Case but Grave Threats Remain

After more than two years of fighting the oppressive HHS Mandate, a June 30 Supreme Court ruling defended the religious liberty of Hobby Lobby and other 'closely held' businesses in a 5-4 decision. Yet, even as the Court recognized that the HHS Mandate placed a substantial and unnecessary burden on for-profit businesses, the narrow ruling failed to rectify the fundamental problems of Obamacare.

The Supreme Court's ruling upheld the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) of 1993. This statute requires federal laws to accommodate individuals' religious beliefs unless there is a compelling interest at stake that cannot be attained through other means.

By exempting only closely held businesses from the Mandate, the Court issued a very narrow decision. According to the IRS, 'closely held' businesses are those which have more than 50% of their ...

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stock owned by "five or fewer individuals." Hobby Lobby and other privately owned businesses which are not governed by a large board of trustees fit this description. However, Fortune 500 companies could not generally be considered 'closely held' and are not exempt from the Mandate.

The Court's decision is consequential because it reinforces that a religiously-formed conscience does not need to be silenced once a person leaves the confines of four church walls. Rather, the First Amendment intended religion to have a role in the affairs of everyday life and commerce. Beliefs on Sunday must not be separated from business on Monday. Any such state-imposed separation violates the very intent of the Founding Fathers.

At the same time, significant problems remain in the wake of the Court's decision. The worst problem is that the Court left open the possibility that conscientious objections might be satisfactorily resolved by a revised mandate ("accommodation"). In this case, the employers' insurance carriers pay directly for the same drugs and devices objected to by Hobby Lobby. This leaves unresolved the status of many entities (including religious schools, charities, and hospitals) with sincere religiously based objections to providing specific drugs and devices, who regard a federal mandate that requires them to take action to require their insurance carrier to carry out the same ends as differing only in form and not in substance from the original mandate.

Moreover, regardless of how the scope of any new mandate is defined, it is difficult to discern what would prevent HHS from issuing a further expansion of "preventive services." This could be expanded to require that most employers provide coverage for surgical abortions or RU 486.

The Court's ruling in Burwell v. Hobby Lobby comes nowhere near to correcting the heart of the problem, which is the overly expansive authority that the Obamacare law itself provides to HHS to define "preventive services." Only comprehensive legislative reform can cure the multiple abortion-expanding components of Obamacare – and such reform can only be accomplished with new leadership in the U.S. Senate and in the White House.

... HHS Mandate and Non-Profits continued from page 4

The Supreme Court's majority opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, argues that the HHS Mandate is illegal because it places a substantial burden upon Hobby Lobby by requiring it to pay excessive fines for not complying. However, Alito proposes that the Mandate could be rewritten to mirror the "accommodation" granted to religious non-profit organizations.

According to this "accommodation" a group like Little Sisters of the Poor could sign a form saying that they would not pay directly for drugs and devices which they consider immoral. However, the lawyers of the Little Sisters argued in court that they cannot sign "the form because they cannot deputize a third party to sin on their behalf." Just because the Little Sisters do not pay for the drugs directly does not make it moral for someone else to pay for these same drugs. The Sisters argue that neither they nor their insurance company can be compelled to provide drugs or devices to which they conscientiously object.

Although it is unclear how the Supreme Court will rule on how the HHS Mandate should be applied to religious non-profit organizations, there are glimmers of hope that these 51 cases will favor religious liberty until more permanent legislation fundamentally changes Obamacare. One of the federal court judges who issued an injunction on behalf of EWTN wrote a strong defense of religious liberty, saying that role of the government is not to determine the rightness or wrongness of a religious belief. Rather, the court must determine whether the conscientious objection of these non-profits "reflects an honest conviction, and there is no dispute that it does."

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Bulletin Inserts

July 6 – In contrast to the rights described by the Declaration of Independence on the Fourth of July, the Supreme Court has created another 'right': "The right created by the Supreme Court in Roe is a constitutional right of some human beings to kill other human beings. I do not mean for my description to be provocative, but simply direct—blunt about facts. One need not presume that the human fetus has a right not to be killed in order to recognize that, as a descriptive matter, Roe creates a right for one class of human beings to kill other human beings." Professor Michel S. Paulsen, NRL News Today, 1/16/14

July 13 - There are so many cases of doctors telling parents to abort their unborn child because of a genetic disorder. Angie Rodgers is one of the many mothers that rejected that advice and brought forth an incredible child, Grace Anna. Despite significant physical challenges, Grace has delighted the world with a You Tube video in which she sings "The Star Spangled Banner." This little girl whom doctors thought wasn't worthy of life is singing her way into America's hearts and hearts around the world. NRL News Today, 4/04/14

July 20 -"It is almost too much to contemplate: the prospect that we are living in the midst of, and accepting (to various degrees) one of the greatest human holocausts in history. And so we don't contemplate it. Instead, we look for ways to deny this grim reality, minimize it, or explain away our complacency—or complicity." Prof. Michel S Paulsen

July 27 - New York has the second highest abortion rate in America and the second highest total number of abortions, exceeding 100,000 annually. More black babies are aborted than are born. For every 1,000 black babies born in the state of New York, 1,223 black babies are aborted. Yet, liberal legislators in the state want to decriminalize all abortions, allowing the violent procedure through the entire nine months of pregnancy. They hope to do this by passing the "Reproductive Health Act" championed by New York Governor Mario Cuomo. LifeNews.com,1/20/14

August 3 –. Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, emphasizes that the right to life is the key to all other rights: "Defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable…Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be." (n. 213)

August 10 – Anatomical studies document that the human body's pain network is established by 20 weeks after fertilization. Neurologists report that unborn babies actually feel pain more intensely than do adults because the child's pain-modifying system has barely begun to develop. Given this medical evidence, is there any other conclusion we can draw except that abortion is inhumane and barbaric; a brutal action against the most defenseless of humans?" Dr. Jean Garton, NRL News, Winter, 2013

August 17- "Every old person, even if infirm and at the end of his days, carries with him the face of Christ. They must not be thrown away." Pope Francis

August 24 – "It should tell you something when passionate advocates of unrestricted abortion are so uncomfortable talking about ... abortion. Perhaps all of the rage abortion extremists aim at their opponents is cover for a deep insecurity - maybe psychological, definitely political - about the reality of what they are defending." Jonah Goldberg, 1/31/14

August 31 – The New York Times once launched a crusade against abortion back in 1871. It made stamping out the abortion trade a "crusade," publishing "a regular series of editorials and reports on the subject, culminating in an August 23, l871 expose, "The Evil of the Age." To buttress its position, the paper sent one of its reporters, accompanied by a woman, to the "city's most notable abortionists." The reporter described, "a systematic business of wholesale murder conducted by men and women in this city that is seldom detected, rarely interfered with, and scarcely ever punished by law." *Scoundrels in Law* by Cait Murphey

September 7 – "Since we are made in God's image (He who is I AM), it is clear that our intrinsic value comes primarily from our being and only secondarily from our actions. ... It follows then that fluid and nutrition should never be withheld as a means of hastening death even if the person will never regain consciousness or is deemed to have a poor quality of life." (Dr. George Delgado, The Southern Cross, September 2012)

"**September 14** - Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, abhorred abortion. She considered it "sordid, terrible, a horror, barbaric," calling the results of abortion "infanticide," "foeticide, an outrageous slaughter." She turned abortion-seeking women away from her clinics, contrasting abortion with birth control which "has nothing to do with interfering with or disturbing life after conception has taken place." Planned Parenthood itself did not offer abortions until the mid-to-late 1960s, once Sanger had died. Dave Tell, *Weekly Standard*, January 2003

September 21 – "It takes a deadening of the soul for a society to become 'desensitized.' We know this because when those senses are awakened, our indifference and willingness to tolerate evil is pushed back. When William Wilberforce fought to abolish the slave trade in England, he moved a boatload of the elite into proximity of a slave ship to smell the stench. Their senses were awakened and a major step forward was achieved to end the horror." After 40 years of the evil of abortion, it seems that America is slowly beginning to open its eyes to the wholesale destruction of unborn children called abortion. Star Parker, 1/14/13

September 28 - "After nearly four decades, Roe's human death toll stands at nearly sixty million human lives, a total exceeding the Nazi Holocaust, Stalin's purges, Pol Pot's killing fields, and the Rwandan genocide combined. Over the past forty years, one-sixth of the American population has been killed by abortion. One in four African-Americans is killed before birth. Abortion is the leading cause of (unnatural) death. in America." Michael S. Paulsen

Suggested Prayers

July 6 – May all women coping with an unexpected pregnancy turn to Jesus who will share their burden, we pray

July 13 – For abortion doctors and their clinic staff that their eyes may be opened to what abortion is and does, we pray

July 20 – For men and women suffering the after-effects of abortion, that they may turn to God for compassion and forgiveness, we pray

July 27 – That this nation may come to see the destructive effects of abortion on our society, we pray

August 3 – That we may be the light for those immersed in the Culture of Death, we pray

August 10 - For a greater sense of the presence of God in the unborn child, we pray

August 17 – For a deeper understanding of the worth of each individual, no matter their age or challenges, we pray

August 24 – For all families caring for a disabled child or aged parent that they may realize Christ is with them, we pray

August 31 – That all who hold positions of authority may never hesitate to speak out in defense of the unborn, we pray

September 7 – That all Christians may reach out in love to those who believe abortion is acceptable, we pray

September 14 – For those bearing heavy crosses in living out their belief in the value of each human life, we pray

September 21 – For all those who have the power to enact or defend life-protecting laws, that they may use this power in accordance with God's will, we pray

September 28 – That all those who work in offering women alternatives to abortion may represent God's love and mercy to those they serve, we pray

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Supreme Court Unanimously Defends 77 Year Old Pro-Life Grandma against Massachusetts Law

WASHINGTON -- In a rare 9-0 decision, the Supreme Court struck down a Massachusetts law which created a 35 foot buffer zone between abortion clinic entrances and pro-life advocates. The lead plantiff, Eleanor McCullen, is a pro-life grandmother who fought the Massachusetts law because she believed it impeded her free speech while regularly counseling women outside of the Boston Planned Parenthood. As a result, the Supreme Court defended both freedom of speech and religious liberty (page 1) which are outlined in the First Amendment.

The Massachusetts buffer zone law prevented any sort of peaceful praying or counseling outside of an abortion facility which could offer a woman an alternative to abortion. Pro-lifers argued that the law "indiscriminately criminalizes even peaceful, consensual, non-obstructive conversation and leafleting." Mrs. McCullen told NPR, "It's America and I should be able to walk and talk gently, lovingly, anywhere, with anybody."

The final ruling was not offered as a decision against abortion but rather as a protection of the right of free speech granted by the First Amendment. Chief Justice John Roberts, who presented the Court's decision, explained that "public streets and sidewalks have developed as venues for the exchange of ideas." If the free exchange of ideas, even opposing ideas, cannot peacefully be shared in a public space, such as a sidewalk outside of an abortion facility, then freedom of speech is rendered null and void. Consequently, the extension of the Massachusetts buffer zone violated the First Amendment rights of pro-life counselors and was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court's opinion on McCullen vs. Coakley is especially surprising in light of the Court's continued reluctance to rule against abortion.

An Unlikely Victor: Pro-Life Grandmother Eleanor McMullen. Photo: Lifenews.com

The most important implication of the ruling is that pro-lifers outside of abortion clinics are present to help women and "are not protestors." The Court explained, "They seek not merely to express their opposition to abortion, but to inform women of various alternatives and to provide help in pursuing them." This is a tremendous victory for pro-lifers who pray and counsel outside of abortion facilities because they are no longer seen as threats, but as advocates.

Anne Fox, the president of the National Right to Life's affiliate Massachusetts Citizens for Life, hailed the ruling as "a victory for all citizens who value their First Amendment rights and for clinic-bound women who might need someone to talk to."

Although the Supreme Court did not eliminate abortion facility buffer zones altogether, this ruling ensures that sidewalk counselors have a legal right to continue their life-saving work.

Injunction Protects EWTN from HHS Mandate for Now

Following the Supreme Court's ruling on Hobby Lobby v. Burwell, several other plaintiffs, including the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) and the Archdiocese of St. Louis, have received injunctions from lower courts so that they do not yet need to comply with the HHS Mandate. There are currently 51 legal cases of religious, non-profit organizations objecting to the HHS Mandate which are all in various stages of the legal process.

Even though the Supreme Court ruled on how the HHS Mandate affects for-profit businesses like Hobby Lobby, it will not consider how the Mandate affects religious non-profit organizations like EWTN and Little Sisters of the Poor until next year at the earliest.

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