



Supreme Court Will Again Decide Whether Employers Can Deny Contraceptive Coverage to Women

(Washington, D.C.) - The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments today in *Zubik v. Burwell*, a consolidation of seven cases that challenge the regulation that guarantees women no-cost coverage for birth control under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). While most employers are required to provide such coverage, an accommodation for religiously-affiliated non-profits that oppose contraception allows them to exclude the coverage from their health plans, so long as they file the requisite paperwork stating their objections so that the insurance company can provide the coverage to affected employees directly. The plaintiffs contend that the act of completing the paperwork to file for the accommodation forces them to be complicit in the use of birth control and violates their religious liberty.

The Court's decision could have implications that reach far beyond those involved in the cases. If the accommodation is stuck down, contraceptive coverage would be lost for millions of hardworking Americans, including the approximately two million students and workers of religiously-affiliated universities and the nearly 800,000 people who receive benefits through Catholic hospital systems.

“The fact that these employers have been offered an accommodation and are now objecting to filling out a piece of paper shows that this case is not about religious liberty but instead is part of a larger agenda to undermine access to reproductive health care by any means possible,” said Jessica Arons, President & CEO of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project (RHTP).

“Denying coverage for a health care service used by 99 percent of sexually active women is discrimination plain and simple. And claiming that paperwork is a substantial burden on liberty but withholding birth control coverage is not is downright offensive.

“Our laws should protect all people, regardless of where they work. The rights of corporations should not be put above women's right to basic and affordable healthcare.”

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