



California Supreme Court Decision in Benitez Case Impacts Pro-Life Physicians

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Sacramento, CA (LifeNews.com) -- A ruling released today by the California Supreme Court could have a negative impact on doctors and medical professionals when it comes to abortion.

In its ruling, the state high court said nonessential, elective care trumps the freedom of conscience of physicians and their ability to practice medicine in accordance with their religious or moral beliefs.

The case -- North Coast Women's Care Medical Group v. Superior Court of San Diego County (Benitez) - involves a situation where artificial insemination was not provided due to the marital status of the patient.

Benitez filed suit arguing she was not provided the procedure because she is a lesbian, but the physicians in the case said they would not have provided artificial insemination to any single woman.

Denise Burke, of Americans United for Life, a national pro-life law firm and legislative group, tells LifeNews.com the ruling could affect pro-life doctors.

"This ruling will deny physicians and other professionals the ability to freely exercise their religious convictions," she said. "By forcing healthcare professionals to choose between conscience and career, we will lose doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who are already in short supply."

Charmaine Yoest, the new president of the group, also said it would hurt pro-life physicians.

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Americans United for Life weighed in on the case.

It filed an amicus brief with the state high court for the Christian Medical & Dental Associations, the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and Physicians for Life.

In the brief, the group argued that federal and state law as well as the ethics standards of major medical organizations support the physicians' right to conscientiously object to performing certain nonessential, elective medical procedures that conflict with physicians' religious and moral beliefs.

Related web sites:

Americans United for Life - <http://www.AUL.org>

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