1	IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT		
2	FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA		
3	TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC.,. Plaintiff, .		
4	vs. Docket No. CV 12-1635		
5	KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, et al . Washington, D.C. AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES . Friday, November 9, 2012		
6	UNION, et al. Defendant.		
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9	TRANSCRIPT OF MOTION HEARING		
10	BEFORE THE HONORABLE JUDGE REGGIE B. WALTON UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE		
11			
12	APPEARANCES:		
13	For the Plaintiffs: Matthew Bowman, Esquire		
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21	Court Reporter: Cathryn J. Jones, RPR Official Court Reporter		
22	Room 6521, U.S. District Court 333 Constitution Avenue, N.W.		
23	Washington, D.C. 20001		
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25	Proceedings recorded by machine shorthand, transcript produced by computer-aided transcription.		

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1 PROCEEDINGS

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THE DEPUTY CLERK: Civil Action Number 12-1635,

Tyndale House Publishers Incorporated versus Kathleen

Sebelius, et. al. Counsel, can you please come forward and identify yourselves for the record?

MR. BOWMAN: Matthew Bowman for the Plaintiffs.

At counsel table with me is Mark Taylor, President and CEO of Tyndale House Publishers, one of the plaintiffs in this action.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MR. BOWMAN: Good morning.

MR. BERWICK: Good morning, Your Honor. Ben

Berwick for the Defendants. And I'm joined by my colleague

Ethan Davis at counsel's table.

THE COURT: Good morning. There are a number of claims that have been advanced by the plaintiff in support of this case. And there are a number of them that I think have been adequately addressed on the papers and we will be able to render a decision based upon that. And that would be the free exercise clause claim, the establishment clause claim, the free speech clause claim, the due process Fifth Amendment claim and the Administrative Procedure Act claim.

So, what I'd want counsel during the time that we have here today, to address the claims asserted under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Counsel for the

1 plaintiff may proceed.

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MR. BOWMAN: Good morning, Your Honor. May it please the Court. I'd like to reserve five minutes of my time for rebuttal, if that's acceptable?

THE COURT: You may.

MR. BOWMAN: Thank you. We are here on a request for a preliminary injunction. Two Federal District Courts have already granted preliminary injunctions against this mandate under the RFRA claim; one in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado, and one recently in the Eastern District of Michigan.

Now, the government in --

THE COURT: And one has rejected the position in Missouri?

MR. BOWMAN: Yes. The posture was a motion to dismiss, but the merits were essentially a rejection of the substantial burden element.

Now, the government in this situation, and as Your Honor is familiar with the papers, has voluntarily provided thousands of groups with what it calls a nonenforcement safe harbor, which it contends is equivalent to the injunctive relief we're seeking here. In other words, all of these thousands of religious groups, the government is voluntarily allowing to be free from the application of this mandate by the government.

THE COURT: But they say that many of those will only be temporary.

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MR. BOWMAN: With regard to the safe harbor, yes, it's a temporary relief, potentially through July 2014. But the motion we're requesting today is also only temporary. It's a preliminary injunction. I don't think this case needs to go to 2014. I don't think it needs to go through deep into 2013. I think we can get what's needed to the Court in a timely fashion. And the preliminary injunction in this case need only last for a period of months.

The government is granting a nonenforcement safe harbor on its own accord for up to a year, more than a year and a half from now in some cases, leaving thousands of employees of these religious groups without what it claims are the benefits of the mandate. And yet, it refuses to consent to nonenforcement against a devoutly religious Bible publisher, Tyndale House Publishers, that's the plaintiff in this case.

And the government, we contend, has no justification to object to our injunction request when it's voluntarily offering what it considers to be the equivalent to thousands of other groups. This massive allowance of nonenforcement by the government undermines all the elements of the RFRA claim Your Honor has asked us to address.

THE COURT: I assume that their position is that

the exemptions that they have granted have only been granted to nonprofit entities, and that they have not granted the exemption to for-profit entities, which is what your client is.

MR. BOWMAN: That is true. The safe harbor only applies to nonprofit entities. But that mere fact doesn't mean, doesn't help the government to advance any of its interests, because a devoutly religious Bible publisher that directs its proceeds to a charitable nonprofit religious organization is exercising religion. The government, by granting a safe harbor, is recognizing that its mandate is a burden that needs to be addressed. And the government is undermining its claim that it has a compelling interest against a preliminary injunction when it's allowing thousands of other groups to be free of the implications of the mandate, at least for a year and a half from now.

THE COURT: Is there any case authority that you can cite in support of the proposition that a for-profit corporation can exercise religion?

MR. BOWMAN: Yes. And we cite multiple cases on that front; the Stormans and Townley case from the Ninth Circuit, the McClure case from the Minnesota Supreme Court, the Morr-Fitz case from Illinois. And if you look in our brief, we cite up to nine cases on this point.

All of those cases allowed for-profit incorporated

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companies owned by religious believers, religious owners, to bring free exercise claims. And said the burden of the government on the company is a burden on the religious exercise of the owners and, therefore, the Court in each of those cases is going to apply the applicable level of scrutiny. And what the government --

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THE COURT: They permitted the corporations to bring those claims on behalf of the owners.

MR. BOWMAN: In some instances it was on behalf of the owners, which is what we've alleged here. Tyndale House Publishers has explicitly pled that it's bringing its claims on its own behalf and on behalf of its owners. In some instance they said it really doesn't matter. This is what the Ninth Circuit said. It says whether you cognize this as the corporation's exercise of religion or the owner's exercise of religion, it doesn't matter. They can bring the free exercise claim. There's obviously exercise of religion here by a corporation that has a religious owners, it has a religious purpose. And the government tells it in this case, it tells Tyndale House Publishers to violate the Bible that it publishes. We've got a burden on religion. It's cognizable under the Free Exercise Claim. We're going to apply the scrunty level.

Now, what the government wants to do in this case is to prevent this Court from applying the scrutiny level

because it knows that this mandate can't withstand the scrutiny level. RFRA applies strict scrutiny and this mandate is arbitrary, it fails those standards of strict scrutiny, it fails the requirement in the Lukumi case that the government, at minimum, can't leave appreciable damage to the same interest that it claims in this case. And what the government has done here that the Court recognized in Denver, is it's allowed a hundred and ninety one million Americans to not have to comply with the mandate in this case.

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And yet, it says that it turns around and says that the 260 employees in Tyndale House Publishers somehow represent a paramount, grave interest of the highest order and can somehow pass the most demanding test of constitutional law for the government to claim a compelling interest. And yet, two-thirds of the country don't have to comply with that same interest. It's just not important enough to the government to impose its mandate.

And so, because the government knows that it can't succeed under the strict scrutiny test, that's why it's attempting to come to court and say well, we shouldn't even apply the test because this company can't exercise religion in the first place.

The McClure case in the Minnesota Supreme Court, not only rejected that view, rejected it decisively. It

said it was conclusory and unsupported to claim that when religious owners act in business through a corporation, that they're not exercising religion. They are. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act says that it applies to any free exercise of religion. It doesn't say that it doesn't apply in business. There's no business exception to the free exercise claim in the First Amendment or in RFRA.

In fact, most of the Supreme Court cases are in the business context. Looking at free exercise claims, United States versus Lee was an Amish employer. And the Court in the United States versus Lee said that just the fact that he had to pay a tax that he disagreed with was a burden, was a burden on his free exercise of religion, and so the Court was going to apply the scrutiny level that it decided to apply there.

The Court in Thomas versus Review Board and Sherbert versus Verner, those were cases where people were employees and they weren't even being told by the government to do something against their beliefs. They were -- they actually wanted the government to pay them for unemployment benefits. And the Supreme Court said yes, you're acting in employment, you're deciding you don't want to do something, you're exercising religion.

There's a fundamental error I think that runs as a theme through the government's brief that I'd like to point

out. And the error is to conflate the different elements of RFRA. The RFRA has four elements: It's free exercise of religion by the plaintiff and a substantial burden thereon, and then the government has to show compelling interest in least restrictive means. And what the government has done in this case is it cited cases that decided that some application of the scrutiny level did not go in plaintiff's favor.

So, in United States versus Lee, the Court said, this tax, it upheld the tax against the employer. And the government is taking these cases and coming to this Court and saying, you see, this person isn't exercising religion in the first place.

Well, that's a conflation of the elements of RFRA. United States versus Lee didn't say that the employer wasn't exercising religion and burdened by it. It said yes, they were, actually had a whole paragraph saying yes, they are exercising religion, they have asserted sufficient burden, but it applied a level of scrutiny more akin to Smith that's not -- it's never said it was applying the compelling interest test. And so, it passed the scrutiny level.

So, cases -- just the mere fact that a religious plaintiff has lost doesn't mean that the religious plaintiff wasn't exercising religion. So, the government is citing all these cases saying oh, well, here the religious

plaintiff ultimately didn't succeed because those laws were different than the mandate in this case. It's trying to use those --

THE COURT: Does the ownership structure create a problem for you in this case in that the ownership is held through several trusts? Whereas as I understand in all of the other cases you've been talking about, there was direct ownership by individuals. Whereas here, you've got another entity which is the owner of the plaintiff. Does that once removed circumstance complicate your argument about the exercise of religion by the individual owners?

MR. BOWMAN: It doesn't, and here's why: The 97 percent owner of Tyndale House Publishers is a nonprofit religious organization. So, essentially what you have in this case is you have a religious company, thoroughly religious. It donates its proceeds to charity. In fact, if you look at the numbers, it actually donates more than a hundred percent of its profits to charity because it ties pretax money to charity and then it takes the profits and 97 percent of that go to a nonprofit organization.

So you have this thoroughly religious company owned by a nonprofit organization. The government admits that religious nonprofits can exercise religion. So the question is, can the owner of Tyndale House Publishers exercise religion? Well, the government admits that it can.

The owner of Tyndale House Publishers is a nonprofit religious organization. And the government admits that nonprofits religious organizations can exercise religion.

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In these other cases, you have a company owned by individuals who can exercise religion. So, the question isn't a formality question of what's the structure. The question is, and the Court discussed this in the Bellotti case, the First National Bank versus Bellotti, where it said when the Court considers a free exercise claim, it doesn't look at legalisms and formalities of well, what's the exact structure here and who's doing what?

What it says is, what's the activity here? What's the exercise? Is this the kind of exercise that the First Amendment is designed to protect?

Now, we submit to the Court that publishing Bibles for an evangelical purpose and then directing your proceeds to charity is at the heart of what the First Amendment is intended to protect. In fact, it's very hard to imagine the notion of religious freedom in the last 600 years without the activity of publishing Bibles for religious purpose. This is an activity in this case that is so squarely within what the First Amendment and the Religion Freedom Restoration Act are designed to protect. We think that it's non questionable.

THE COURT: Let's assume that you make a showing

of substantial burden. Why doesn't the government have a

2 | compelling reason to have this law in place in light of the

desire to provide health care? And we know that the lack of

health care is a major problem in American society. And

5 | it's having a significant impact on the health of

6 individuals and also the economic health of the country.

So, why doesn't the government have a compelling reason to

8 | have this law in place?

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MR. BOWMAN: Essentially three reasons. The first is that under the, the Supreme Court has decided a case under RFRA, the O'Centro Espirita case. And the Court there, as it has done throughout its compelling interest jurisprudence, has said that the government can't state its interest generically. We want to promote health care. The government has to state a specific interest against the claimant in this case.

So, Tyndale isn't claiming a right not to provide health care. Tyndale is just saying we provide a generous health plan, we even provide all preventive services. Heck, we even provide contraception. We just don't want to provide the kinds of things the FDA calls contraception that we contend can cause early abortions. Just those things.

The government has to show a compelling interest to force Tyndale to provide these abortifacient drugs and to force Tyndale to provide these abortifacient drugs, a

1 | religious Bible publisher.

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Now, the second problem for the government is that Congress itself has decided that this interest is not an interest of the highest order. Congress has decided that two-thirds of the country, a hundred and ninety-one million Americans, through the grandfathering exemption, don't have to be subject to the mandate.

Now, the grandfathering exemption is the idea that if you like your health plan you can keep. And so if you haven't made -- you can make changes to your health plan, but if you haven't made significant ones since 2010, you don't have to comply with much of the Affordable Care Act.

THE COURT: So we're talking about how many people who will be exempt based upon that?

MR. BOWMAN: A hundred and ninety-one million.

The government's own data, which Judge Cane cited in the Newman decision in Colorado, the governments own data projected out as far as the government projects it, shows that, as of 2013, there will still be a hundred and ninety-one million people not subject to the mandate by Congress' own choice.

THE COURT: But they project that that number will decrease. And I don't know what their predicate is for that and how they can calculate what the decrease would be, but

they do suggest that there will be a decrease over time.

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MR. BOWMAN: And that's the problem because the compelling interest is the government's burden. The Supreme Court in O'Centro Espirita made it very clear that once the plaintiff shows free exercise and substantial burden, it's the government's burden, even at the preliminary injunction stage, to show a compelling interest.

And then the Supreme Court in the Brown decision in 2011, said that the government has to show compelling evidence to support its burden, its showing. And the evidence has to be causal. And any uncertainty about that evidence cuts against the government.

So the government is saying well, in its brief the government says oh, we think the grandfathering exemption will trickle away. They don't cite any data showing it will trickle away. The only data they cite is the data that Judge Cane cited, which says that as of 2013, there will still be a hundred and ninety-one million people, two-thirds of the country, not under the mandate.

Congress has decided -- and the government's rule say that the grandfathering it's not -- they don't say it's a phrase in, they don't say it goes away, there's no sunset on grandfathering. In fact, the government publicly makes it very clear, which we cite in our brief, that grandfathering is a right that people can keep it as long as

they want perpetually.

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So, let's just suppose that there were data, and there isn't, showing that this hundred and ninety-one million people will decrease by ten million people a year for the next 20 years. Even if that were true, which the government hasn't shown, the government would still not have a compelling interest enforcing 260 people at a Bible publishing company to perceive abortifacients, when they're letting ten million people in the year 19 out of the same mandate.

What Congress has decided is that actually grandfathering plaintiffs do have to do some things under the Affordable Care Act. Grandfathering plaintiffs can't impose lifetime limits on certain coverage. Grandfathering plaintiffs have to cover dependents up to age 26. Grandfathering plaintiffs can't exclude certain preexisting conditions, in particular for children.

So, Congress has said, you know what, if you have a grandfathering plaintiff, you're in this two-thirds of the country, you still have to do things under the Affordable Care Act. But this mandate is not important enough to be one of the things you have to do. By definition, that is not an interest of the highest order, a paramount interest, a grave interest, that can satisfy what the Supreme Court says is the compelling interest test.

THE COURT: There was one aspect of the case that I didn't glean from the papers that were filed. And I don't know if it's really relevant, but the employees who work for your client, they're not, I assume, required to take a pledge, a religious pledge consistent with the dictates of the owners or the company, are they?

MR. BOWMAN: Well, some are. Obviously, they're not hiring atheists to edit the Bible, right? But the janitor is not necessarily required to take a statement of faith. But the company itself is thoroughly religious and we -- it's always been that.

This is the 50th year of Tyndale House Publishers. They were founded for an evangelical purpose to promote the Bible and other Christian literature. They have weekly prayer. They send their employees out on mission trips. So, no one is working at this company unclear about that this is a thoroughly religious company. It's owned by a religious entity. It has a religious mission. Its proceeds go to religious charity. No one is uncertain about that within the employee base.

And the fact is that, those thousands of groups that the government is giving a safe harbor to, they are not required to only hire coreligionists. Those thousands of safe harbor recipients have -- there's no requirement. All they have to do is have an objection and then -- and certify

that they have this objection, they haven't been covering these things.

THE COURT: You've got about five minutes left.

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Can you address the narrowly-tailored component of the test?

MR. BOWMAN: I can. The least restrictive means test under the Kaemmerling decision and under the Supreme Court's decision, particularly in Riley, says that if the government has another way to achieve its goal, it can't violate religion to achieve its goal. And in the Riley case, the Supreme Court was looking at a state that said we need to protect people who receive solicitation phone calls from the fact that they don't always know that the solicitor is being paid.

And the Supreme Court said look, free speech is a fundamental right. This is subject to strict scrutiny, and you could do this another way. You could publish on your web site the fact that there are certain, the government could, that there are certain people who are paid solicitors. You could just prosecute fraud. If people are lying and saying oh, well all the money is going to go to charity, but it's not true, you just prosecute fraud. And all of those alternative ways of doing things are things that the government has to choose first.

What the government has done here is the very first thing it decided to choose was religious exercise.

1 Now, the government is already giving out abortifacients.

2 It's already funding abortifacients. This is not -- so when

3 we say oh, the government has another way to do this, we're

not proposing something that's strange or unusual or even

5 | something -- the government is already doing this on a

6 massive scale in Title X, Title XIX of the Public Health

7 Service Act.

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THE COURT: So, you're suggesting that the government should pay for this?

MR. BOWMAN: I'm not suggesting the government should do it. I'm saying if the government wants to do it, it could, and it's already doing it. And that fact alone --

THE COURT: If they made a determination that this type of service to be provided to women is important from a women's health perspective, and realistically the government's trough isn't very big right now, and if they think it's important that as many people be captured by this statute in order to hopefully provide a wider scope of health care treatment for the American public, then why isn't this the least restrictive means to accomplish that objective?

MR. BOWMAN: Because strict scrutiny imposes a higher burden than that. Strict scrutiny doesn't say that the government can choose the means it thinks is best, or that it thinks is most convenient or cheapest. Strict

scrutiny says you have to chose the least restrictive means. 1 2 So, the means that is least restrictive --3 THE COURT: But if it's because of economic 4 constraints it would be impossible to achieve the result, 5 how is that a viable alternative? 6 MR. BOWMAN: Well, the government hasn't met its 7 burden to show it would be impossible to achieve that 8 result. And it hasn't met that burden for a very simple 9 It's already doing this. It's already providing 10 free contraception. Contraception is already accessible in 11 a wide scale and the government is already subsidizing --12 THE COURT: But it's not providing it to your 13 client's employees? 14 MR. BOWMAN: No, but -- it's not provided by 15 Tyndale House Publishers. But the government is providing 16 it in Illinois through subsidies. It could provide it 17 through those same mechanisms to employees of entities that 18 have religious objections. 19 THE COURT: But you're not suggesting that if they 20 decided they were going to fund for-profit entities, that

MR. BOWMAN: It may well cost the government more.

And what we're saying is that the case law makes it clear

that just the fact that an alternative might cost the

that would not increase the amount of expenditures they

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would have to make?

government more doesn't mean that it's not a least restrictive means. The Kaemmerling case says that no alternative forms of regulation have to be available in order to achieve the goal. The fact is that, no matter who women get a device or a drug from, that drug is going to have the same effect. So whether it comes from Tyndale House Publishers, whether it comes from the government, it's going to have the same effect. Whatever that effect is, the government can't show and it hasn't met its burden to show that it -- that this, that it would not be least restriction, a lesser restricted means.

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THE COURT: What if theoretically the government, who knows, we may not be far away from this hypothetical, the government shows that we're bankrupt, we don't have any money, there's no way that we'd be able to pay for it. But providing universal health care is still a goal on American society and the only way we can accomplish it is through what we've done?

MR. BOWMAN: I don't think that, I don't think that the theoretical -- what if it can show it was bankrupt?

Well, if the government was bankrupt, giving women free contraception --

THE COURT: In a sense it is. If it were a business and the business was borrowing as much money as the United States government borrows, it would be bankrupt.

MR. BOWMAN: Yeah. And Congress has already decided that this mandate is not at the top of the list of things that the Affordable Care Act has to impose. Because two-thirds of the country doesn't have to receive it under grandfather plans. So, Congress hasn't even said that this is so important that the society will collapse unless Tyndale House Publishers gives its employees abortifacient drugs.

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So that's not even a position that Congress takes. Could it be theoretically true that the government would be so bankrupt that it would place the mandate of abortifacient drugs on Tyndale House Publishers above National Defense and above Social Security and above Medicaid? Well, I suppose it's possible. It's kind of hard to even think of that question. I'm not sure how relevant that it is exactly here.

The fact that the government runs a deficit doesn't stop it from spending money. And providing abortifacient drugs to religious objectors to this law on a very miniscule scale, it's frankly not even a cognizable drop in the bucket of what the government spends its money on presently in --

THE COURT: You reserved five minutes, so.

MR. BOWMAN: Oh. Thank you.

THE COURT: Very well. The government may proceed

- and you can proceed until five after 10:00.
- MR. BERWICK: Thank you, Your Honor. Good
- 3 morning.

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- 4 THE COURT: Good morning.
- MR. BERWICK: Your Honor, when individuals
- 6 establish a for-profit corporation, that corporation becomes
- 7 | subject to a host of laws and regulations: Environmental
- 8 | laws, employment discrimination laws, taxation laws, and
- 9 | laws like those that are at issue in this case that protect
- 10 | the health and well-being of the employees of that
- 11 corporation.
- 12 THE COURT: But it also doesn't give up all of its
- 13 | rights either, does it?
- MR. BERWICK: No, Your Honor.
- 15 THE COURT: Citizens United makes it clear that at
- 16 | least in that context, a corporation is the equivalent of
- 17 person.
- MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I agree that the
- 19 corporation doesn't give up all of its rights. And, in
- 20 | fact, we wouldn't dispute that the owners of Tyndale can
- 21 operate their corporation in many ways, in many respects
- 22 | consistent with their religion. I also agree that --
- 23 THE COURT: And you would agree that religious
- 24 rights in American society is one of the most important
- 25 | rights that our constitution recognizes?

MR. BERWICK: I don't disagree with that, Your Honor. But what I would say is that, in regard to your Citizens United comment, the Supreme Court has said most recently in Hosana-Tabor, decided this year, that the free exercise clause protects only religious organizations.

So, the Court, I think --

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THE COURT: You would agree that if we were talking about the Catholic church, for example, that the Catholic church would have a legitimate reason to assert that it should not have to pay for these items that the government is saying that this plaintiff should have to pay for?

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, if we were talking about the Catholic church, I think we wouldn't necessarily agree that they would have a RFRA claim. I think we would still argue that there was no substantial burden in that case for other reasons. But I don't -- we would not dispute that in that case the Catholic church had certainly exercised religion under the free exercise clause.

THE COURT: Well, if this plaintiff was a charitable organization, would that make a difference? If they weren't a for-profit entity, but they did exactly what they do now, would that make a difference?

MR. BERWICK: I think it could, Your Honor. I don't think -- I think that when the Court is applying the

test to determine whether Tyndale is religious or religious enough, can exercise religion under the free exercise clause, or is secular for the purposes of the free exercise clause, certainly its status as a for-profit corporation is important as we've said in our briefs.

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THE COURT: So why do you categorically conclude in reference to this particular statute that because it's for profit, regardless of what it does with those profits, that it can't qualify for the exception?

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, first of all, I want to say I don't think we've made a categorical statement to that effect. I don't think we've said a for profit can never qualify.

THE COURT: Well, what was it about this company?

I mean, this seems to be, from what I am familiar with, the closest corporation that you probably could have where its mission is religious related.

MR. BERWICK: I don't disagree, Your Honor, that this is a closer call than some other cases. And we don't question the sincerity of their religious brief. But I think, as we've tried to layout in our briefs, there are several different tests the Court could apply. We have suggested that the tests under Title VII, as Your Honor is aware, Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment, including religious discrimination.

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However, there's an exemption in Title VII for
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     religious corporations. And courts have had to --
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               THE COURT: But they wouldn't be precluded under
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     Title VII, would they, for claiming the exemption?
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               MR. BERWICK: I think they would, Your Honor.
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    now there are -- there's not one Title VII test.
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               The Ninth Circuit has a test where --
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               THE COURT: Because I understand, Title VII
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     would not preclude them from claiming the exemption because
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     they are a for-profit corporation.
               MR. BERWICK: Well, I actually don't,
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     respectfully, I don't agree with that, Your Honor.
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     it, again, it depends on what circuit you're looking to.
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     And the DC Circuit has not yet adopted a test under that
     exemption, but the Ninth Circuit has. And under the Ninth
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     Circuit's test status is a for-profit company in
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     dispositive. A for-profit company cannot qualify as a
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     religious corporation under Title VII.
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               The Third Circuit test, which we've also
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     referenced --
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               THE COURT: But as far as standing is concerned,
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     the Ninth Circuit has accepted the premise that the
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     corporation can sue on behalf of its owners.
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               MR. BERWICK: Yes, Your Honor. In Stormans and
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    Townley, the Ninth Circuit did hold that a corporation, the
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corporation in those cases could sue on behalf of its owners.

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THE COURT: Isn't this an appropriate factual scenario to justify my doing the same thing?

MR. BERWICK: Well, we don't think so, Your Honor. First of all, we don't agree with the standing determination of the Ninth Circuit there. As we've explained in our briefs, the Ninth Circuit did not engage in any third-party standing analysis. There's no hinderance to the owners bringing their own claims here, but they are not parties here. But that, that aside, Your Honor, just because the Ninth Circuit determined that the corporations in those cases --

THE COURT: Well, I assume that if the plaintiffs had brought this, the owners had brought this case in their own name, you would say, well, they really aren't the corporation. It's the corporation and, therefore, it's the corporation that has to assert the right. And then we'd be back in the --

MR. BERWICK: That's right, Your Honor. No, I don't disagree with that. I think that's correct. So, that's why I think --

THE COURT: So from your perspective, it would be irrelevant whether the plaintiffs were parties in this case?

I mean, the individual owners were parties in this case?

MR. BERWICK: I would say it would be irrelevant 1 2 to the outcome, yes, Your Honor. And the reason is, Your 3 Honor, because the -- as we've said, there is -- when individuals take the corporate form, there is, it's black 5 letter law that there is a legal separation between the 6 corporation and the owners. And the requirements --7 THE COURT: Do you dispute what the counsel for 8 the plaintiffs says happens to the profits that the 9 corporation generates? All of those profits they say go 10 into either religious-related chartable activity or other 11 types of charitable activity. 12 MR. BERWICK: We don't dispute it, Your Honor. 13 mean, I would note that some small percentage of the profits 14 is taken out of the corporation, as it is their right, for 15 the personal use of the founder's family, which is of course 16 their right as a for-profit corporation. But I --17 THE COURT: A very small percentage. 18 MR. BERWICK: Yeah, we don't dispute that most of 19 it goes to this foundation. But I don't think that's 20 particularly relevant, Your Honor. The point is --21 I mean, I don't know. I mean, if it's THE COURT: 22 using its profits in the same way that a religious

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, so I have a couple

organization uses its profits, how do you make a reason

distinction between the two?

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of answers to that. First of all, I don't think we claim that the for profit/nonprofit distinction is always a perfect one. But as the Ninth Circuit found in Spencer and as the Circuit has found University of Great Falls in a related but different context, the reason that courts have used the nonprofit/for profit distinction to determine whether a company or a corporation is religious is because it allows the court to avoid engaging in more problematic inquires about the religious belief of the corporation and

possible entanglement issues.

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So, I think that the Ninth Circuit explained this quite well in Spencer. For profit -- the for profit/nonprofit distinction is a useful litmus test, if you will, for courts so that they don't have to engage in more in depth inquiries about the company's sort of religious beliefs, religious purposes.

THE COURT: So, you're saying it's just a factor to consider or that it sets the norm? It's the red line for when a corporation is entitled to the exemption?

MR. BERWICK: Well, I think it really depends on what test Your Honor adopts. I mean, again, under the Ninth Circuit's Title VII test it is dispositive. Under the D.C. Circuit's test in the context of NLRB jurisdiction in University of Great Falls, it's also dispositive. In the Third Circuit's Title VII test it's not -- we wouldn't claim

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that it's dispositive. But I still think it is, it's a
really important factor under any of those tests. And
Tyndale would not qualify as a religious organization under
any of those tests.
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I would add, Your Honor, that under the Third Circuit's tests, where fore profit --

THE COURT: We discussed that, but what about the test here?

MR. BERWICK: The test in this circuit?

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. BERWICK: Well, again, Your Honor, the D.C. Circuit has not adopted a test for Title VII. And the for the reasons we've explained, we think Title VII is a useful guide for this Court. That being said, so in University of Great Falls, which we cited in our brief, where the court, the D.C. Circuit was deciding whether it would violate the free exercise clause for NLRB to have jurisdiction over the plaintiff in that case, the court was required to determine whether the plaintiff was a religious organization or a nonreligious organization.

And the court in that case held that for profit status is dispositive. In other words, a for-profit company -- a for-profit entity cannot be a religious organization in that context.

THE COURT: But that's a very different structure.

MR. BERWICK: It's a different context, but I 1 believe it's informative, at least, for this Court. 2 3 THE COURT: Okay. 4 MR. BERWICK: So, Your Honor, I think I started to 5 explain --6 THE COURT: I'll have to go back and look at the case. I've done a lot of reading and things run together 7 8 after a while. But did that case, did the Court in that 9 case say definitively that under no circumstances can a 10 for-profit corporation exercise religion? 11 MR. BERWICK: Well, the short answer is, I think 12 yes, Your Honor, although it was really in the NLRB 13 jurisdiction context. What the Court said is, for the 14 purposes of NLRB jurisdiction, we have to distinguish 15 between the religious and secular. And a for-profit company 16 can never be religious under that, in that context. 17 THE COURT: Well, I think it's kind of difficult 18 to characterize this corporation as secular. 19 MR. BERWICK: Well, again, Your Honor, we don't 20 question the sincerity of their beliefs. We certainly 21 understand that this is a closer case than maybe some others 2.2 like a mining company or something. But we do think, Your 23 Honor, that for purposes of the free exercise clause and 24 RFRA, it is not, Tyndale is not a religious organization.

THE COURT: All right. Let's go to the

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substantial burden component. Do you content that it would not be a substantial burden to require them to pay for these contraceptions?

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MR. BERWICK: Yes, we do, Your Honor. So, there are sort of two overarching reasons for that. The first is that, as I started to explain at some point, there is a legal separation between Tyndale and its owners. And the requirements of these regulations fall solely on Tyndale, the corporation, and its group health plan. It requires nothing of Tyndale's owners.

And the reason that's important, I think, Your
Honor, is because if the opposite were true, if a burden on
the company or a requirement on the company were always
deemed to be a substantial burden on its owners, if they
were treated as the same thing, what that would mean is that
any company, no matter how secular, that the employees of
that company, that the rights and protections of the
employees of that company would become subject to the
religious beliefs of the corporation's owner, regardless of
whether the employees knew of that belief, regardless of
whether the employees shared that belief. And as my
colleague stated, at least some of Tyndale's employees may
not share their religious beliefs.

THE COURT: The employees don't, but the directors of the trust that basically run the corporations, they do.

MR. BERWICK: Yes, but I think the point I'm making is that the employees, the rights and protections that those employees are entitled to under the law would become limited based on the religious belief of the corporate owners, no matter how secular the company was, if it were deemed that a requirement on the company is a burden on the owners as well.

THE COURT: Well, what would be the limitation here as far as the employees are concerned? The plaintiff is prepared to provide certain types of contraceptions, just opposed to these three types of contraception because they believe from their perspective that to have to pay for them in a sense results in the death of a human being. And they say that that's just totally contrary to their religious beliefs and, therefore, they should not be forced to violate their religious dictates by having to pay for that.

MR. BERWICK: Yes, Your Honor. But I think the -again, we don't question their religious belief, but I think
the implications are much broader than that. Because
theoretically, any company could challenge any law or
regulation on religious objection grounds and argue that
even though the requirement is on the company, no matter how
secular the company is, if it violates the owner's religious
beliefs, the company doesn't have to comply with that law.

And I think, Your Honor, that in addition --

THE COURT: I guess I don't agree with that proposition that regardless of how secular they are, that they'd be able to make the assertion. I think we have to look at this corporation as they appear before the Court. And I think they clearly, and you don't deny the fact, that there is a honest, you know, position regarding their belief and religion. And that the corporation follows those dictates.

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MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I think, I think there are two distinct ideas here: One is, is the corporation itself religious such that it can exercise religion? And my, our argument is that it is not. Although again, we admit that it is a closer case than for a lot of other companies.

And then the second question is, can the owners -is it a substantial burden on the owners when the
requirement falls on the company that is a separate legal
entity? I think for that question precisely what their
beliefs are doesn't really matter. I mean, they allege that
they're religious beliefs are being violated. We don't
question that. And we don't question that that is the
belief.

THE COURT: But considering the closeness of the relationship that the individual owners have to the corporation to require them to fund what they believe

amounts to the taking of a life, I don't know what could be more contrary to one's religious belief than that.

MR. BERWICK: Well, I don't think the fact this is a closely-held corporation is particularly relevant, Your Honor. I mean, Mars, for example --

THE COURT: Well, I mean, my wife has a medical practice. She has a corporation, but she's the sole owner and sole stock owner. If she had strongly-held religious belief and she made that known that she operated her medical practice from that perspective, could she be required to pay for these types of items if she felt that that was causing her to violate her religious beliefs?

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I think what it comes down to is whether there is a legal separation between the company and --

THE COURT: It's a legal separation. I mean, she obviously has created the corporation to limit her potential individual liability, but she's the sole owner and everybody associates that medical practice with her as an individual. And if, you know, she was very active in her church and her church had these same type of strong religious-held beliefs, and members of the church and the community became aware of the fact that she is funding something that is totally contrary to what she professes as her belief, why should she have to do that?

1 MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, again, I think it comes down to the fact that the corporation and the owner 2 3 truly are separate. They are separate legal entities. 4 THE COURT: So, she'd have to give up the 5 limitation that conceivably would befall on her regarding 6 liability in order to exercise her religion? So, she'd have 7 to go as an individual proprietor with no corporation 8 protection in order to assert her religious right? Isn't 9 that as significant burden? 10 MR. BERWICK: Well, I think, Your Honor, that 11 Tyndale, as we've said, can operate their company consistent 12 with their religion beliefs in many, many ways. But I think 13 where --14 THE COURT: And the other thing here as I understand, this is a self-insurance program. They don't 15 16 have an insurance carrier, they are self insured. 17 MR. BERWICK: Yes, Your Honor, but I don't think 18 that -- I still think that the self-insured plan is part of 19 the company, the corporation, which is still separate from 20 I don't think that the fact that it's self the owners. 21 insured is particularly relevant here. 2.2 THE COURT: Okay. 23 MR. BERWICK: Your Honor, I think --24 THE COURT: Anything else on the burden component?

MR. BERWICK: No, Your Honor. I think, I think

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1 | I've made the points that I'd like to make.

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THE COURT: What about their position about the number of people who currently are being exempt from the application of this legislation?

MR. BERWICK: So, I think that, Your Honor, that is a question of whether the interest is compelling or not.

We -- well, first of all, the number 191 million, I'm not sure where that comes from. I mean, the government has estimated that the, as I think Your Honor pointed out, that the grandfathering of health plans from certain requirements is really a phase in over time of these requirements. It's not an exemption.

THE COURT: Is there a number that the government has put on it?

MR. BERWICK: I believe, Your Honor, the government estimates that half of health plans will no longer be grandfathered by 2013.

THE COURT: And what's your basis for that?

MR. BERWICK: There was, I think they ran a model of several different scenarios and plugged some assumptions into the model, and came out with some different numbers. I can't say precisely what went into that model, but.

THE COURT: And if we focus merely on this plaintiff, has an assessment been made as to how many other plaintiffs would fall into the same category and how large

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     that would increase the pool?
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               MR. BERWICK: Your Honor, I can't give precise
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     numbers. But I do think the appropriate inquiry is not just
     this plaintiff, but this plaintiff and similarly-situated
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    plaintiffs.
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               THE COURT: How many similarly-situated plaintiffs
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    are there?
               MR. BERWICK: I apologize, Your Honor.
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                                                       I don't
 9
     know.
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               THE COURT: Who have this type of closely-held
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     entity where the owners have a very close relationship to
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     the corporation, and the corporation clearly is espousing
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     the religious beliefs of the owners?
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               MR. BERWICK: I don't know the precise number,
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     Your Honor. I can say that we are --
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               THE COURT: Isn't that important?
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               MR. BERWICK: Isn't that important to?
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               THE COURT: Can't I just generically place them
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     with all other nonprofits and use that as the predicate for
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     whether this legislation is narrowly drawn?
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               MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, as I think -- I
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     actually don't think it is that important. I think the
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     compelling -- the interest is compelling even as to Tyndale
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     itself. I mean, the employees of Tyndale -- well, the
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Institute of Medicine determined that this set of preventive

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services, including FDA-approved contraception, is important to the healths and well-being of women and to advancing gender equality.

THE COURT: As far as the health issue, I mean, that's an interesting proposition. I understand what's being asserted. But how does the providing of these three items, these contraceptive items, how does that improve the health of women?

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I'm not sure that I agree that that's the appropriate inquiry. I think --

THE COURT: What is it then?

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MR. BERWICK: Well, I think -- so, Tyndale, I think what Tyndale is arguing is that before imposing this type of requirement, the government has to examine the precise, I'll say nature or sense of the employer's employees, precisely which services the employers object to and which they don't. But that would make this administrative scheme completely un-administrable, Your Honor. And I think, even though O'Centro recognized that, RFRA is not intended to make it impossible for government to administrate certain administrative schemes.

The Institute of Medicine recommended a set of preventive services for the health and well-being of women.

THE COURT: And I guess my question is, how would this preventive measure in and of itself improve the quality

1 of healths for women? 2. MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I think --3 THE COURT: Because, I mean, yes, if a pregnancy 4 can cause other health issues, I can see that. But 5 generally, pregnancy in and of itself doesn't cause other 6 health consequences. 7 MR. BERWICK: Yes, Your Honor. But I think the 8 Institute of Medicine report showed that unintended 9 pregnancies carry with it pretty serious health 10 consequences. 11 THE COURT: Like what? 12 MR. BERWICK: Well, I think --13 THE COURT: And is that universal? I mean, there 14 are a lot of people who have unintended pregnancies and 15 they're gleeful about the fact that they were lucky enough 16 to become pregnant. 17 MR. BERWICK: I wouldn't say that it's universal, 18 Your Honor, but I do think there is -- unintended 19 pregnancies, there is a strong correlation between 20 unintended pregnancies and worse health outcomes, both for 21 the mother and for the infant. Not to mention the resulting 2.2 impacts on gender equality. 23 THE COURT: Yeah, I assume there's some anecdotal 24 proof that would support that. But has there been any type

of other evaluations that would show quantitatively that

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1 | what you say is correct?

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MR. BERWICK: Well, I would direct the Court to the Institute of Medicine report. I think it's more that anecdotal, I think it's pretty overwhelming that there are -- that unintended pregnancies are associated with worst outcomes.

And I do think, Your Honor, that despite the fact, assuming the Court were to find of a substantial burden and strict scrutiny applies, but even in that context the administration's finding of fact or the agency's finding of fact are, the normal standards of administrative deference still apply.

THE COURT: Do we have any data as to how many pregnancies are avoided as a result of the use of these substances? I assume there's probably no way that assessment is available.

MR. BERWICK: I certainly don't have that at my fingertips, Your Honor.

So, Your Honor, I do think, I think we were talking about the grandfathering before.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. BERWICK: I would like to say because I think plaintiffs do focus on that, grandfathering is really a phase in of these requirements, it is not a permanent exemption, which is what plaintiffs ultimately are asking

for in this case. The Court in Legatus ruled I think just last week, I think had some useful analysis of that. The Court there said, "The Grandfathering Rule seems to be a reasonable plan for instituting an incredibly complex health care law, while balancing competing interests. To find the government's interests other than compelling only because of the Grandfathering Rule would perviously encourage Congress in the future to require immediate and direct enforcement of all provisions of similar law without regard to pragmatic considerations, simply an order to preserve compelling interest status."

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THE COURT: Okay. You have about five minutes left and I'd like to address the final question.

Why couldn't the law and regulations have been drawn more narrowly to accomplish the same objective without the imposition that occurs here?

MR. BERWICK: Well, Your Honor, I think the way that -- the alternative means that plaintiff propose is, as I think Your Honor identifies, simply that the government pay for it. But courts have recognized that an alternative means is not a viable, least restrive -- less restrictive means under RFRA unless it is feasible and equally effective in advancing the interest of the law. And in considering feasibility, Your Honor, courts have said that cost is a consideration in determining whether an alternative means is

feasible.

So, here what plaintiffs are effectively suggesting is that that government establish an entirely new program, an entirely new administrative scheme, to provide contraception at cost to the government to the employees of corporations that object to providing such contraception.

That would require --

THE COURT: Do we know what the added cost would be?

MR. BERWICK: I don't know what, exactly what the number would be, Your Honor. But I think it goes without saying that it would be costly. It would require, first of all, of course new legislation to establish such a program. It would require setting up an entirely new scheme, administrative scheme, and it would require the government to pay for it. And I just don't think that qualifies as a feasible alternative means, even under strict scrutiny, Your Honor.

Can I, Your Honor, address a couple of things that the plaintiff said in their argument?

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. BERWICK: So, first of all, plaintiff said that two courts have granted preliminary injunctions against these regulations. I would just point out, Your Honor, that neither of those courts actually found that plaintiffs in

1 those cases, that plaintiffs in those cases had a showing of likelihood of success on the merits. Instead, both appear 2 3 to apply a more relaxed preliminary injunction standard that 4 I think does not apply in this circuit, Your Honor. 5 THE COURT: I think a Colorado court did apply the 6 Tenth Circuit, which is more relaxed from what we have here. 7 MR. BERWICK: I believe the Michigan court did as 8 well. I believe the Michigan court did as well, Your Honor. 9 I would say I think that decision is a little unclear, but I 10 think that the Court pretty clearly stated that neither side 11 had shown the likelihood of success on the merits. 12 this, in this circuit, the plaintiffs do have to show a 13 likelihood of success on the merits. So I'm not sure how 14 helpful those other cases are to them. 15 THE COURT: But you would agree that those 16 entities in those two cases were very different than this 17 entity? 18 MR. BERWICK: Certainly. Well, very different. 19 don't think different in a way that changes the outcome, but 20 I would agree that it is a closer case as to whether this 21 entity qualifies as religious. Certainly, Your Honor. 2.2 THE COURT: Okay. 23 MR. BERWICK: I think if Your Honor has no other

THE COURT: As I understand it, maybe I'm wrong on

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questions, I think --

this, but in the Title VII context a for-profit corporation

can under certain circumstances qualify as a religious --

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MR. BERWICK: Again, Your Honor, it depends what test is being applied. In the Ninth Circuit that is not the case, a for-profit corporation can never qualify in the Ninth Circuit. It is dispositive.

In their reply briefs, plaintiffs disagree with that statement, but I think it's perfectly clear on the face of the Ninth Circuit's opinion. And I would urge the Court should take a look at it. We certainly don't agree with plaintiffs on that point.

And then in the Third Circuit, the Third Circuit certainly has left open the possibility that a for profit could qualify under Title VII. But we're not aware of any case where a court has actually found that for profit could quality under Title VII.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. BERWICK: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Rebuttal?

MR. BOWMAN: Thank you, Your Honor. There's also no case where a court has said for-profit organizations can't qualify for the First Amendment.

The Ninth Circuit case way a three-way split decision. Judge Kleinfeld said something similar to what Your Honor mentioned earlier, that the way the company

spends its money is the relevant inquiry, not whether -- the formality of it being for or nonprofit. Judge O'Scannlain pointed out that the U.S. Supreme Court left the question open. So, you've got two judges in the Spencer case saying that there's not a categorical exclusion of for profits.

The Third Circuit's decision isn't just for the
Third Circuit, they site several other circuits. I think
the Fifth and the Eleventh are cited in the Lukumi decision.
That's the majority view.

The government is proposing, therefore, a variety of tests.

THE COURT: So, are you espousing that I should take the position that a corporation can exercise religion, or take the position that the Ninth Circuit is seemingly taking that the corporation can exercise the rights of the owners in the exercise of their religious beliefs?

MR. BOWMAN: Either one gets where we need to go. We believe both are true, especially with a Bible, devoutly religious Bible publishing company that gives its proceeds to charity.

The government essentially, what they're doing here is they're proposing a variety of tests for what religion is that are much smaller than what the First Amendment in RFRA says what religion is, that are specialized to particular statutes like Title VII or the

NLRB, which talks about something being substantially religious. And they are saying well, we are going extrapolate from these much narrower statutory tests, we're going to extrapolate this to the First Amendment, which doesn't have these limitations.

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The First Amendment in RFRA says any free exercise of religion. And the government says no, no, no, since Title VII says only religious corporations can exercise religion, than that's what RFRA means. Well, if that's what Congress meant, that's what Congress would have said. Congress didn't say RFRA only applies to the Title VII exemption or the NLRB exemption. Congress said in RFRA any free exercise of religion.

The Supreme Court in Hosanna-Tabor did not say that only religious organizations can exercise religion. It was talking about a particular kind of establishment clause free exercise interest in the autonomy of a religious organization like a church choosing its leader. That's not the question in this case. There is no Supreme Court case saying that only, quote, unquote, religious organizations can exercise religion.

Title VII is not RFRA, and the government is proposing to this court that if the court recognized what Stormans and Townley and McClure and Morr-Fitz and all these other cases recognized, that no court has said opposite,

that yes, a Bible publisher exercises religion, that all of our commercial regulations will collapse because all these secular companies will suddenly be automatically entitled to exemptions.

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Again, they are collapsing the elements of RFRA.

Just because someone can exercise religion doesn't mean they win; it means the government can -- has to show strict scrutiny. Title VII Writ Large, these other commercial -- OSHA, these other commercial regulations may well satisfy strict scrutiny. This Court doesn't have to say they don't because the mandate in this case is arbitrary and selective and it picks and chooses who it wants to apply itself to and it exempts two-thirds of the country.

So, a finding for Tyndale in this case does not in any way threaten the commercial regulatory system of our country because there's not -- it's not an automatic win, it's that the mandate in this case is so flawed it can't pass strict scrutiny.

The government does not have evidence of grandfathering, that it is a phase in, that it will go away. Where does the 191 million number come from? It comes from Judge Cane's decision at page one in the Westlaw citation, and he drew it from the government's own regulation, I believe it's 75 Federal Reg 34538. That's the grandfather relation. They have a table in there projecting numbers out

to 2013.

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The government says oh, well, most plans won't be grandfathered. Well, but what it doesn't say is that most of those plans are small. And the plans that are still grandfathered contain 191 million people. And moreover, the government admits on its own web page that most large employer plans will continue to be grandfathered.

In other words, most employers similarly situate to Tyndale. Large employers, over 50, are going to still be grandfathered, and yet, somehow the government says it has a compelling interest to force Tyndale to provide abortifacients, when it's quite happy to allow women in most large employers not to have what it claims is a compelling interest in health and equality.

Now, how does this mandate improve women's health? The government hasn't shown data -- our brief does discuss the IOM report, which essentially says, well, it seems that maybe there are some generic health consequences. The Court doesn't have to say that abortifacients or contraception have no benefit. That's not necessary for the ruling here.

What the government hasn't shown is that this mandate will actually lead to a prevention of compelling grave harms. So, in other words, maybe women who are employed or who are in family that it's employed, can already afford these things if they want them. There's no

- 1 | evidence that the mandate will actually achieve its effect
- 2 of giving women things that they currently don't have.
- 3 | There's no evidence that the grave harm -- that the -- that
- 4 | they are going to prevent harm that's grave, and all of the
- 5 | IOM's data, by it's only admission, is what the government
- 6 called associated with. In other words, unintended
- 7 | pregnancy, which the IOM admits it doesn't know how to
- 8 define, is associated with some things that might be -- that
- 9 are negative.
- 10 Well, that's several steps removed from showing
- 11 | that this mandate is necessary, what the Court said in the
- 12 | Brown decision, to prevent an actual problem. And that
- 13 they've shown what Brown required was causal evidence, not
- 14 correlation.
- 15 THE COURT: Is there anything in the record about
- 16 | what the cost of these items are? Are there generics on the
- 17 | market, is the cost significantly low? What do we know as
- 18 | far as what's in the record?
- 19 MR. BOWMAN: I think -- if the record includes the
- 20 | federal regulations, I think there might be something in
- 21 | there. We didn't, we didn't submit that.
- The government proposes that we're requiring them
- 23 to create an entirely new system. That's not true.
- 24 | Medicaid already exists, it already provides these things.
- 25 | They already have a channel, all they'd have to do is lift

- 1 the income restrictions in Medicaid to do this. And then
- 2 | say, well -- or they could just say well, look, Medicaid
- 3 will provide abortifacients to everyone they're already
- 4 giving it to plus people who work at religious
- 5 organizations.
- 6 THE COURT: Is that really realistic, considering
- 7 | the economic health of the country and the economic health
- 8 of those programs from a long-term perspective? I mean,
- 9 obviously those programs are going to have to be revamped,
- 10 but they're not going to be available because they're going
- 11 broke.
- MR. BOWMAN: Well.
- 13 THE COURT: So, I don't think we should be
- 14 expecting the government to expand the scope of those
- 15 | programs and says that's a viable alternative.
- MR. BOWMAN: The ACA is an expansion of Medicaid.
- 17 | So, the Affordable Care Act believes that expanding Medicaid
- 18 is important. If the government really believes this is a
- 19 | compelling interest, the very tiny cost of providing these
- 20 | items through religiously objective --
- 21 THE COURT: It's an expansion, but as I understand
- 22 | it, it's an expansion so that it captures more people with
- 23 the hope that more money is brought into the system and,
- 24 therefore, it would help the viability or enhance the
- 25 | viability of those existing programs.

MR. BOWMAN: I'm not sure how much money would be brought in by covering more Medicated recipients.

THE COURT: No, I mean, you expand the scope of who has to pay into the system.

MR. BOWMAN: Sure. The point I would like to make in response is twofold. First, the cost of providing items to religiously-objecting entity employees through a channel that the government already uses would probably be not registerable as a percentage of the total U.S. multi trillion dollar budget. And secondly, if the government thinks it's as compelling interest, then the government has already answered the question of whether that would be permissible.

In the Riley case and other Supreme Court cases, a least restrictive means is not eliminated by costs. And as Your Honor pointed out, the limited liability doesn't mean moral and religious separation. Stormans and Townley, all these cases say that the fact that there's a corporations here doesn't mean that religion isn't implicated by the owners of the company. It certainly is and the free exercise clause protects them.

THE COURT: Okay. I have to finish this because we have other matters I have to get to.

There is some weighty issues that I have to address obviously in this case. I fully appreciate the

government's perspective about seeking to enhance the availability of medical insurance, which I think is obviously a very important objective for the country to try and achieve because we have all too many of our fellow citizens who can't get medical help. As a result of that, they have poor health and we know that there is a disparity between those who have it and don't as far as the life expectancy and the quality of life as it relates to their health. And so, I can appreciate the significant interest that the government has in that regard.

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I also fully appreciate from the plaintiff's perspective, religion is a fundamental, and the ability to exercise freely one's religion is a fundamental tenet of our country. It was something that the founding fathers considered to be essential to our democracy, and I don't tread lightly on the imposition on those rights. I totally agree, and it's not denied by the government, that we have a company here that's owned by individuals who clearly have various strong-held religious believe. And that while this is a for-profit corporation, there's no challenge to the fact that the profits that it makes are used in the same way that one would expect a religious organization that's for, that's not for profit to use funds that come into their entity, i.e., to advance their religious beliefs and to provide charitable assistance to others in our society.

And clearly it seems to me, based upon what's been 1 2 presented, that the overwhelming bulk of the income that 3 this company makes does, in fact, serve the same purpose 4 that religious entities serve. So, it's a tough case 5 because it seems to me to just take the categorical position 6 that just because this company is a for-profit company, 7 considering all the other surrounding circumstances, means 8 that they should be treated differently than a nonprofit religion corporation that does essentially the same things 9 10 that this company with the proceeds that they acquire. 11 So, I need to think about the arguments that were 12 made, to review the papers again and look at the cases very 13 closely again. And I do go on vacation next weekend, so I'm 14 going to do all I can, working with all of my clerks, to try 15 and get an opinion out by next Friday. Thank you. 16 Thank you, Your Honor. MR. BOWMAN:

MR. BERWICK: Thank you, Your Honor.

[Thereupon, the proceedings adjourned at

10:18 a.m.]

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CERTIFICATE I, Cathryn J. Jones, an Official Court Reporter for the United States District Court of the District of Columbia, do hereby certify that I reported, by machine shorthand, the proceedings had and testimony adduced in the above case. I further certify that the foregoing 53 pages constitute the official transcript of said proceedings as transcribed from my machine shorthand notes. In witness whereof, I have hereto subscribed my name, this the 10th day of December, 2012. Cathryn J. Jones, RPR Official Court Reporter

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