**Obama’s contraceptive mandate heads to Supreme Court | New York Post**

That’s the upshot of the Supreme Court’s decision to hear lawsuits against the contraceptive mandate filed by the Christian family that owns the Hobby Lobby craft and Mardel Christian bookstore chains. David Green and his family say the mandate would force them to underwrite practices they regard as immoral. From the moment the administration first put forth this mandate, it’s been clear that church-affiliated nonprofits — from Notre Dame to the Tyndale House Publishers — would protest. What few could foresee is that the mandate would end up bringing to the Supreme Court the question Hobby Lobby now poses: Does a business owner forfeit his faith as the price of doing business? The family that runs Hobby Lobby is committed to “honoring the Lord in all we do by operating the company in a manner consistent with Biblical principles.” Although they’re Christian, the appeals courts that ruled in their favor pointed out it’s easy to imagine, say, a kosher butcher or a matzo maker advancing much the same argument for their right to conduct their businesses in accord with Jewish law. The contraceptive mandate has made the price of such principles high. In Hobby Lobby’s case, if the company refuses to comply it would face fines of $1.3 million dollars per day. In a brief filed this year, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty summed up Hobby Lobby’s predicament this way: “When the government threatens to ruin a family’s business unless they renounce their faith, the pressure placed on them is unmistakable. In other words, ‘Your business or your religion’ is just as effective a threat as ‘Your money or your life.’” Which puts Chief Justice Roberts back at the center of attention. On the one hand, the last time ObamaCare came before him he found the individual mandate constitutional. He did so, moreover, with an it’s-a-tax argument that even the other four justices who voted with him didn’t seem to believe, and no other court had found. On the other hand, Roberts also wrote the unanimous opinion in the big religious-liberty case the high court decided last year. This was Hosanna-Tabor, in which a teacher for a Lutheran school sued when she was fired. Writing for the court, Roberts called the government’s arguments on religion “extreme” and “untenable” — and came down foursquare in favor of the right of churches to choose their own ministers. The administration’s handling of the contraceptive mandate carries the same whiff of intolerance that characterized its argument in Hosanna-Tabor. In Hosanna-Tabor, the government’s position was that the ministerial exception for churches shouldn’t exist at all. The Obama argument on the contraceptive mandate isn’t much of an improvement: You only qualify for an exception if your ministry excludes those outside your faith. In other words, only a Good Samaritan who limits his help to other Samaritans could qualify. Now the bill for this absolutism is coming due. Instead of a debate over the religious rights of churches, we now have a spirited legal debate over the religious rights of businesses. Fully half the suits filed against the contraceptive mandate come from for-profit companies. And guess what? Right now, of the 38 cases where there have been rulings on the merits, 32 have backed the businesses. The big divide among these courts is whether businesses have rights as businesses, or only through their owners. The case against the government is pretty strong. Back in 1993, Congress passed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act near-unanimously, and President Bill Clinton signed it into law. Though it confirms that religious liberty isn’t absolute — the government, for example, can enforce inoculations or quarantines in the event of epidemic — it requires the government’s interest to be compelling and the means chosen the least restrictive. That doesn’t guarantee the Supreme Court will find for the Hobby Lobby. It does suggest the debate President Obama triggered with his contraceptive mandate has now exploded far outside its original confines. In other words, once again the Obama administration has overreached. The ironies are legion: The chief justice who blessed ObamaCare’s individual mandate may well author a decision that the employer contraceptive mandate violates federal civil-rights law. The progressives who are the first to holler that businesses have a corporate responsibility to follow ethical policies argue here that they have no rights outside the bottom line. And the same White House that kicked off this whole debate by drawing an exemption so narrow that Jesus Christ himself wouldn’t qualify may well find it has provoked the Supreme Court into confirming a far broader business right to religious freedom. What's Your Take? So John Roberts gets another wack at obamacare!!!!!!!!!! He pretty much gutted obamacare and the irs the last time he took a whack at obamacare!!!!1 Can't wait for his ruling on this one!!!!!!!!!!! Go to youtube and search for "traitor or patriot" then scroll down to the video that starts with "see something say something"!!!!! And check it out for your self!!!!!!!!!!! If the Supremes uphold the right of Hobby Lobby to exempt themselves from the requirements of the ACA, what would stop any other for-profit company from claiming a religious exemption for paying overtime? Or following the OSHA standards? Once a corporation engages in public commerce, then they have to obey all the laws that apply to that commerce. Hobby Lobby's owners, of course, always have the option to sell or close up. If they repeal Obamacare, I expect them to repeal the law that mandates automobile insurance as well.  Also, they should repeal tons of laws that dictate what should be optional, for example seat belt laws, income taxes, laws concerning the 'free public' education, and plenty more. Oh please. Go read Employment Division v. Smith and watch all the 'conservative' justices rule that a religious minority group couldn't use peyote in their religious ceremonies. The mandate is a neutral law of general applicability. Same case. Should be open and shut. Now watch as these same justices bend over backwards to sustain a bunch of whiny petulant christians. If the Hobby Lobby precedent is allowed to stand, any company owned by a Scientologist can deny its employees mental-health coverage. Any company owned by a Jehovah's Witness can deny its employees blood-transfusion coverage. Any company owned by a Christian Scientist can deny its employees coverage for any medical treatments which don't rely on prayer. And so on, all because following the law "would force [businesses] to underwrite practices they regard as immoral." Are you sure you want to open up this can of worms? I know this may sound a little "crazy", but it seems that when Christians appear to lose, God really is winning. It's all through the Bible. So, as much as I would like think the mandate will be struck down, my feeling it will not be and will stand. Roberts will side against Hobby Lobby. Watch and see... If Hobby lobby loses, we are stepping closer again to religious persecution of Christians, and the result will be a further deterioration of freedom and a future of social conflicts. Obama and the left have created so much divisiveness in our land in a short time. Roberts could very well twist his mind into a pretzel again and find a way to coerce companies to knuckle under to his rule and pay for abortions . Roberts is a groveling double-dealing coward.   Once again the GOP gets bamboozled by a turncoat weasel.  Get rid of the federal judiciary, or at the very least make every judge stand for election with limited terms. @ Brian Kelly Brian - I suggest you reread Smith if you think this is the same case.  The neutral law of general applicability was the criminal prohibition of peyote that was not meant to target religion. The dispute in Smith was whether unemployment benefits could be denied to somebody who used peyote for so-called religious reasons.  Not seeing how it is the "same case" at all. @ davidhouston Because they are always right with motives pure as the driven snow, unlike those mean hating racist and stupid Republicans.  Come on david, don't you know anything?  You must be a conservative. @ Jack C I'm quite sure.  This is a can of worms that needs to be opened.  Choices have consequences....for employers, for employees, for everyone. If people do not like the practices of a particular employer, they should seek work elsewhere.  It is not easy, and it is not certain the wages will be the same or better, but THAT is the choice one makes.  If employers are not wise in how they compensate their workers they will soon find themselves bereft of workers. In every case, the challenge is for people to make choices -- to decide which is the higher dictate of conscience, and how best to navigate often contradictory choices while preserving personal integrity.  As a society, we have become unwilling to place a premium on that personal integrity, pursuing the vain and futile notion that our choices are bereft of any consequences that are "too hard." Yes, please open this can of worms.  Let the debate rage hotly and heavily across the country.  Let people confront the stark unfiltered reality of all their choices and all their consequences. @ Jack C - yeah, i'm sure.  no one is forcing you to work at hobby lobby.  if the health care offered is part of a basket of compensation that does not meet your needs, look elsewhere.  you sound like sandra fluke, left alone and defenseless with no birth control, unless someone else pays for it.  do you pay for anything you need or do, or is it all someone else's responsibility, child?..... @Jack C So what? If you don't like it don't work there. If you don't like it risk your own capital and start a company of your own. If you are too lazy, cheap or stupid to do so-then please go away and quit inflicting your delusions as what is Right or Wrong on the rest of us. @ Jack C Your comment reads as though employees are prisoners with no option but to continue working for the same employer. In the real world, employees are free to leave at any time. If the don't like the policies of their employer, they should do so immediately. @Jack C First, who really opened this can of worms?  The Obama administration did, by COMPELLING insurance companies to provide contraception coverage in the first place.  Second, in answer to your question, YES.  And BTW, in the examples you cite, it is not clear that there would be sufficient demand to justify an insurance company's decision to even offer such coverage.  For example, the JW business owner might want an insurance policy that does not cover blood transfusions, but it is unclear that he or she would be able to find one in the market place, and it is unclear whether or not any non-JW employee would want to continue working for a company that did not offer coverage for a transfusion. @ Rushbabe Intriguingly, Roberts' while tortured and not altogether persuasive, has done little to bolster ObamaCare's claims of legitimacy.  Roberts' chose to proceed from a theoretical basis that proper judicial review suggested looking for a means to find a law constitutional, and took that concept to an extreme not seen in recent Supreme Court terms.  Thus he grounded the individual mandate in taxation rather than the commerce clause. But as a result, the ObamaCare penalties are forever decreed "taxes", and to alter them becomes a raising of taxes--something few politicians are willing to do.  Roberts also voided the requirement of states to expand Medicaid. Now the Court will rule on the religious overtones of ObamaCare.  If Court obsevers are correct, Hobby Lobby will prevail.  But what then?  If employers cannot be compelled to provide health insurance that covers contraception and abortion, can individuals still be compelled to purchase the same?  And if they cannot, and the exchanges do not offer policies plausibly conformant to an individual's conscience, does there not arise a rather large exception to the individual mandate, possibly a fatal one? Roberts' legal reasoning on the individual mandate was weak and not at all compelling, but on balance he has done almost as much damage to ObamaCare itself as he has to individual personal liberty and responsibility. @ Perry Logan When would they do that?  Of course, as Liberals do think that employees are serfs of their organization, I can understand the confusion.  Of course, if you can show where Hotel Lobby has put a gun to anybody's head, forcing any employee to not buy birth control, I would love to hear about it. Perry.   Funny..............Christians have their faith which doesn't include abortons, and sometimes birth control... get over it.   I stick with Hobby Lobby since I am a Christian... I say women and their sperm donors should buy their own birthcontrol/ condoms.... They can buy beer, drugs, but they can't spend $4 a month on birth control pills?   Who is trying to fool who Perry Logan Obama supporter? @ John Smith Hard to say.  Historically, the Supreme Court has almost always been on the side of religious freedom, as it is specifically mentioned in the Bill of Rights.  And the vote has usually been close to unanimous.  I doubt it will be in this case, but I expect Hobby Lobby to win. @ John Flanagan I hope they keep pushing. There are some 63 million Catholics alone in the U.S. Every day priests are stepping up to the pulpit and talking about the need to protect the Church's freedom. That NEVER used to happen. Catholics are moving away from Democrats and it will continue........ @ John Smith John, you're absolutely correct!  However, we should all know by now that the Left NEVER gives up, NEVER relents, and NEVER declares something "the law of the land" - unless and until it's a law only THEY like. @ Sub Framer @ Jack C How do you feel about Viagra - JACK?  I think - if a 40 year-old can no longer perform, that is unfortunate.  A 70 year-old, on the other hand, maybe he shouldn't be having sex.  Show me where Viagra is being adjudicated or taken off the table - JACK? @ Rushbabe @ Perry Logan Rushbabe - are you a Limbaugh supporter?  I wonder, given your comments and your moniker.  Perry Logan - seems to be no Obama fan from where I sit.  You're just on two different sides of the same coin.