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Stand for Health Freedom Files Amicus Brief in Major West Virginia Religious Freedom Case

West Virginia - Stand for Health Freedom (“SHF”) has filed an amicus curiae brief before the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia in support of families challenging the denial of religious exemptions to school vaccine requirements in *West Virginia Board of Education v. Miranda G., et al.*

The brief argues that West Virginia’s Equal Protection for Religion Act (EPRA) and longstanding First Amendment jurisprudence prohibit the state from treating religious conduct more harshly than comparable secular conduct. SHF contends that the state’s policy denying religious exemptions while permitting numerous secular exceptions and forms of noncompliance violates both constitutional protections and West Virginia law.

“This case reaches far beyond West Virginia,” said Stand for Health Freedom policy director Valerie Ferrell. “The outcome will influence how courts and policymakers nationwide approach informed consent, parental rights, and religious liberty in health decision-making.”

In its filing, SHF explains that the organization has worked across the country to defend religious exemptions and informed consent protections, including efforts in Massachusetts, Florida, Hawaii, and New Jersey. The brief also emphasizes that forty-five states and the District of Columbia currently allow religious exemptions to childhood vaccination requirements. SHF states that the case highlights a broader national movement to preserve and expand protections for informed consent and religious freedom on a state-by-state basis. While legal strategies vary across jurisdictions, SHF maintains that the fullest expression of health freedom is a society without coercive medical mandates.

The organization’s amicus brief further argues that governments possess authority to protect public health, but that authority is not unlimited when constitutional freedoms are implicated. “If a state can override religious rights in health care decision-making,” the filing states, “the government is playing God, doctor, and parent.”

The case centers on whether West Virginia officials may deny religious exemptions despite the protections established under the state’s EPRA law and existing constitutional standards governing religious liberty. SHF urges the Court to affirm the lower court’s injunction protecting families seeking religious accommodations.

About Stand for Health Freedom

Stand for Health Freedom is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting informed consent, parental rights, religious freedom, and constitutional protections in health decision-making. Through education, civic engagement, and public policy advocacy, SHF has mobilized more than one million Americans nationwide.