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## **D.C. Federal Court Asked to Halt Enforcement of HHS Mandate against Ohio Company until Decision Rendered in Case on Appeal**

Washington, D.C. (May 24, 2013) — Today, the American Freedom Law Center (AFLC), a national, nonprofit Judeo-Christian law firm, filed an unopposed motion for a preliminary injunction in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, requesting that the court enjoin the Obama administration from enforcing the HHS “contraception” mandate against Johnson Welded Products, Inc. (“JWP”), a family owned and operated company in Ohio, and its President and principal owner, Ms. Lilli Johnson, until an appellate decision is reached in a similar case that is currently pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

AFLC filed the federal lawsuit challenging the HHS mandate on behalf of JWP and Johnson this past April. Johnson, who is a practicing Catholic, opposes the HHS mandate because it violates her deeply held religious beliefs.

Robert Muise, AFLC Co-Founder and Senior Counsel, commented: “It is exceedingly important that the court enter the requested order halting the pending enforcement of this patently unconstitutional mandate against this Catholic owned and operated company in Ohio.”

David Yerushalmi, fellow Co-Founder and Senior Counsel of AFLC, added: “Let there be no doubt, AFLC is deeply committed to halting Obama’s war on religious freedom. And this is just the next step.”

The HHS mandate requires Johnson and JWP to provide coverage for contraception, sterilization, and abortifacients (drugs that chemically induce abortion) in JWP’s health care plan. If they fail to comply with the mandate, JWP will face fines of up to \$27,000 per day. Absent an injunction, the mandate will apply in full force against JWP on July 1 of this year.

As the majority owner of JWP, Johnson strives to run her company consistent with her Catholic beliefs, including the traditional Christian teaching that abortion and contraception are

intrinsically evil. Consequently, the HHS mandate is forcing her to choose between following her religious beliefs or committing a grave sin. If she chooses to follow her religious beliefs and convictions, then she and JWP will be subject to severe fines and penalties that would have a crippling impact on JWP's ability to survive economically.

As alleged in the complaint, the HHS mandate violates JWP's and Johnson's rights to the free exercise of religion and the freedom of speech under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act. The complaint asks the federal court to declare that the HHS mandate is unconstitutional and to permanently enjoin its enforcement.

In addition to the injunction, AFLC is also requesting a stay of all proceedings until thirty days after the appellate court renders its decision.

Attorneys for the federal government have agreed not to oppose AFLC's motion or the entry of a proposed order enjoining the mandate and staying the proceedings.

The *American Freedom Law Center* is a Judeo-Christian law firm that fights for faith and freedom. It accomplishes its mission through litigation, public policy initiatives, and related activities. It does not charge for its services. The Law Center is supported by contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations, and is recognized by the IRS as a section 501(c)(3) organization. Visit us at [www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org](http://www.americanfreedomlawcenter.org).

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