

IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

NORRIS COCHRAN, Acting Secretary of U.S.
Department of Health and Human Services; et
al.,¹

Defendants-Appellants.

No. 20-15398

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA; et al.,

Plaintiffs-Appellees,

v.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES; NORRIS COCHRAN, in
his official capacity as Acting Secretary of Health
and Human Services,

Defendants-Appellants.

No. 20-15399

¹ Acting Secretary Cochran has been automatically substituted for Alex M. Azar II pursuant to Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 43(c)(2).

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

NORRIS COCHRAN, in his official capacity as
Acting Secretary of the U.S Department of Health
& Human Services, and U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,

Defendants-Appellants.

No. 20-16045

STATE OF WASHINGTON,

Plaintiff-Appellee,

v.

NORRIS COCHRAN and U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,

Defendants-Appellants.

No. 20-35044

**JOINT MOTION TO REMOVE CONSOLIDATED APPEALS FROM THE
ORAL ARGUMENT CALENDAR AND PLACE APPEALS IN ABEYANCE**

Pursuant to Ninth Circuit Rule 27-1, all parties to these consolidated appeals jointly move to remove the appeals from the Court's oral argument calendar and place them in abeyance while new leadership at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) evaluates the issues the cases present. Oral argument is currently scheduled for Monday, February 8, 2021.

1. These consolidated appeals concern the validity of a final rule that HHS promulgated in 2019. The rule, entitled Protecting Statutory Conscience Rights in Health Care, 84 Fed. Reg. 23,170 (May 21, 2019), implicates various federal statutes that protect individuals and other entities with religious or moral objections to providing certain health-care-related services in connection with government-provided or government-funded health care programs. In these appeals, the federal government sought review of decisions in which two district courts—one in the Eastern District of Washington and one in the Northern District of California—vacated the rule.

2. The consolidated appeals are fully briefed, and the Court has scheduled oral argument for Monday, February 8, 2021.

3. New leadership at HHS is currently in the process of arriving at the agency and plans to reassess the issues that these cases present. All parties agree that it would conserve the resources of the Court and the parties to remove the consolidated appeals from the Court's argument calendar and place the appeals in abeyance while HHS undertakes this reassessment. New leadership began arriving at HHS and the U.S. Department of Justice only 19 days before the scheduled oral argument and will need additional time to review the rule in question and the multiple legal issues that are involved in these consolidated appeals; consult with all interested federal agencies and offices; and determine the appropriate course going forward. Given the recent change of administration and the complexity and importance of the issues presented

by the rule and in these appeals, these exceptional circumstances support postponing the oral argument and holding the consolidated appeals in abeyance. *See* 9th Cir. R. 34-2 (“No change of the day or place assigned for hearing will be made except by order of the Court for good cause. Only under exceptional circumstances will the Court grant a request to vacate a setting within 14 days of the date set.”).

The parties propose to file status reports with the Court within 60 days of the order placing the appeals in abeyance.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the parties jointly request that the Court remove these consolidated appeals from the oral argument calendar for Monday, February 8, 2021, and place the appeals in abeyance.

MICHAEL S. RAAB

By: /s/ Sarah Carroll

LOWELL V. STURGILL JR.
SARAH CARROLL
LEIF OVERVOLD
Attorneys, Appellate Staff
Civil Division, Room 7511
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530
(202) 514-4027
sarah.w.carroll@usdoj.gov
Counsel for Defendants-Appellants

NICOLE A. SAHARSKY

By: /s/ Nicole A. Sabarsky

MIRIAM R. NEMETZ
MEGAN E. STRIDE
PETER B. BAUMHART
MAYER BROWN LLP
1999 K Street, Northwest
Washington, DC 2006-1101
Tel: (202) 263-3000
nsaharsky@mayerbrown.com
Counsel for Plaintiffs-Appellees County of Santa Clara, et al.

Respectfully submitted,

DENNIS J. HERRERA
City Attorney

By: /s/ Sara J. Eisenberg

SARA J. EISENBERG
JESSE C. SMITH
RONALD P. FLYNN
YVONNE R. MERE
JAIME M. HULING DELAYE
Deputy City Attorneys
OFFICE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO
CITY ATTORNEY
City Hall, Room 234
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl.
San Francisco, CA 94102
Tel: (415) 554-4700
Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellee City and County of San Francisco

JAMES R. WILLIAMS
GRETA S. HANSEN
LAURA S. TRICE
MARY E. HANNA-WEIR
SUSAN P. GREENBERG
H. LUKE EDWARDS
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY
COUNSEL, COUNTY OF SANTA
CLARA
70 West Hedding Street, East Wing
San José, California 95110-1770
Tel: (408) 299-5900
Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellees County of Santa Clara

RICHARD B. KATSKEE
KENNETH D. UPTON, JR.
AMERICANS UNITED FOR
SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND
STATE
1310 L Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: (202) 466-3234

CAMILLA B. TAYLOR
OMAR GONZALEZ-PAGAN
LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND
EDUCATION FUND, INC.
105 West Adams, 26th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603-6208
Tel: (312) 663-4413

GENEVIEVE SCOTT
RABIA MUQADDAM
CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE
RIGHTS
199 Water Street, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10038
Tel: (917) 637-3605

*Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellees Los Angeles LGBT Center, Whitman-Walker Clinic, Inc.
d/b/a Whitman-Walker Health, Bradbury Sullivan LGBT Community Center, Center on
Halsted, Hartford Gyn Center, Mazzoni Center, Medical Students For Choice, AGLP: The
Association of LGBT+Psychiatrists, American Association of Physicians For Human Rights
d/b/a GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality, Colleen McNicholas, Robert
Bolan, Ward Carpenter, Sarah Henn, and Randy Pumphrey*

XAVIER BECERRA
Attorney General of California
RENU R. GEORGE
Senior Assistant Attorney General
KATHLEEN BOERGERS
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
STEPHANIE T. YU
NICOLE RIES FOX
Deputy Attorneys General

By: /s/ Neli N. Palma
NELI N. PALMA
Supervising Deputy Attorney General
1300 I Street, Suite 125
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550
Tel: (916) 210-7522
*Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellee the State of
California*

ROBERT W. FERGUSON
Attorney General of Washington

By: /s/ Jeffrey T. Sprung
JEFFREY T. SPRUNG
LAURYN K. FRAAS
PAUL M. CRISALLI
R. JULY SIMPSON
NATHAN K. BAYS
Assistant Attorneys General
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 464-7744
*Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellee the State of
Washington*

JANUARY 2021

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to Fed. R. App. P. 32, I hereby certify this motion complies with the requirements of Fed. R. App. P. 27(d)(1)(E) because it has been prepared in 14-point Garamond, a proportionally spaced font, and that it complies with the type-volume limitation of Fed. R. App. P. 27(d)(2)(A), because it contains 587 words, according to the count of Microsoft Word.

s/ Sarah Carroll

SARAH CARROLL

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on January 28, 2021, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of the Court by using the appellate CM/ECF system. Service will be accomplished by the appellate CM/ECF system.

s/ Sarah Carroll

SARAH CARROLL