

BELMONT ABBEY COLLEGE REACTS TO NEW HHS MANDATE RULES

BELMONT, N.C. (August 22, 2014) -- Private, non-profit, Catholic College, Belmont Abbey the first to sue regarding the HHS mandate, today announced its reaction to the new HHS Mandate Rules that create a new way for non-profit organizations like Belmont Abbey College to state their objections to the HHS required coverage.

The new rule announced today allows non-profits to notify the Department of Health and Human Services of their objections to specific coverage like contraception or abortifacients. The federal government will then contact insurers and third-party administrators to provide the coverage.

"We are still reviewing this new rule but we are hopeful that this is a move in the right direction and that the final rule will protect our conscientious objection rights and fully restore our religious liberty," said Belmont Abbey College president Dr. William K. Thierfelder. "We remain concerned that the new rule is still a modification of the "accommodation", and still requires the provision of the objectionable coverage."

The Beckett Fund who represents Belmont Abbey College in its suit against the federal government regarding its mandate had this to say: "This is latest step in the administration's long retreat on the HHS Mandate. It is the [eighth](#) time in three years the government has retreated from its original, hard-line stance that only "houses of worship" that hire and serve fellow believers deserve religious freedom. We look forward to reviewing the new rule and its implications for the 102 cases."

Belmont Abbey filed the first lawsuit against the HHS mandate on November 10, 2011 and refiled their lawsuit on November 20, 2013. The case is currently stayed and awaiting decision from other cases in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.