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### **Hawaii Attorney General Joins Multistate Amicus Brief Defending ACA Birth Control Coverage Mandate in Supreme Court**

HONOLULU – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors today joined a coalition of 21 attorneys general led by California Attorney General Xavier Becerra and Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey filing an amicus brief in the United States Supreme Court supporting Pennsylvania in its case defending contraceptive coverage and counseling mandated under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In the brief filed in *Donald Trump et al. v. Pennsylvania*, the attorneys general explain that states have an interest in safeguarding the ACA's birth control coverage requirement, which has benefited more than 62 million women across the country. The coalition argues that access to affordable birth control is critical to the health, well-being, and economic security of the states' residents.

"The mandate ensuring contraceptive healthcare needs to be protected," said Attorney General Connors. "It guarantees necessary services for Hawaii families and prevents the increase of additional burdens on our state."

In 2017 and 2018, the Trump Administration issued rules which ignored the ACA's birth control requirements and allowed employers to deny birth control coverage to their employees based on religious or moral objections. A coalition of 14 states and the District of Columbia successfully defended the ACA's birth control coverage requirement. California obtained injunctions against the Trump Administration's harmful and illegal rules in the Ninth Circuit, while Pennsylvania obtained an injunction in the Third Circuit.

After California and Pennsylvania won injunctions that protect the birth control coverage mandate, the federal government, Little Sisters of the Poor, and March for Life filed petitions for certiorari in the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court granted the petitions in the Pennsylvania litigation. The petitions from the California litigation remain pending.

In the amicus brief, the attorneys general argue that the states have an important interest in providing women seamless contraceptive coverage. Tens of thousands of women will lose their cost-free contraceptive coverage if employers are allowed to exempt themselves from the ACA requirement. This loss of coverage will result in a reliance on state-funded programs that will increase the states' costs associated with the provision of reproductive healthcare and will likely lead to an increase in unintended pregnancies.

Joining California Attorney General Becerra, Massachusetts Attorney General Healey and Attorney General Connors in filing the amicus brief are the attorneys general of Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

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