



FACT SHEET

Cenzon-DeCarlo v. The Mount Sinai Hospital

ABOUT Cenzon-DeCarlo v. The Mount Sinai Hospital

Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund filed suit on behalf of Catherina Cenzon-DeCarlo, a nurse who was forced to assist in the abortion of a 22-week-old preborn child despite her longstanding religious objections.

FACTS

- On Sunday, May 24, 2009, Cenzon-DeCarlo was scheduled to assist in a late second trimester abortion for a woman 22 weeks into her pregnancy. The hospital has known of her religious objections to abortion since 2004.
- When Cenzon-DeCarlo reminded officials of her religious objections, she was told that if she did not participate in this case, she would be charged with “insubordination and patient abandonment.” If Cenzon-DeCarlo opted not to assist in the abortion, she faced disciplinary action, including possible loss of her job and/or nursing license.
- The scheduled abortion was labeled as a “Category II,” the classification for operations needing to take place within six hours, not a “Category I,” which is the classification for “patients requiring immediate surgical intervention for life or limb threatening conditions.” This demonstrates that Cenzon-DeCarlo’s immediate surgical assistance was not required.
- In fact, the patient’s condition didn’t even rise to a Category II. The patient could have been maintained in stable condition until the hospital assigned a nurse to the case who would have been willing to assist the abortion.
- Cenzon-DeCarlo observed no indications that the abortion was a medical emergency requiring her assistance. For example, when the patient was brought into the room for surgery, her blood pressure was not at a crisis value, and other standard measures for patients in crisis had not been taken on the patient.
- As part of her nursing duties, Cenzon-DeCarlo was forced to watch the doctor remove the bloody arms and legs of the child from the mother’s body. She was also forced to treat and deliver the bloody body parts of the 22-week-old preborn child to the specimen room.
- Cenzon-DeCarlo has suffered emotional and psychological trauma from being forced to assist in the abortion.

RESOURCES

- Information on pre-born child in 22nd week of gestation: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wrtk/develop/week22.shtm>
- Photos of pre-born babies in various stages:
 - <http://pregnancy.about.com/od/pregnancyphotos/ig/Ultrasound-Photo-Gallery>
 - http://www.telladf.org/UserDocs/20wks_300dpi.jpg (may be freely reproduced if unaltered)
- Video of twins born at 22 weeks: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q1YVFHIA8E&feature=related>
- Videos of babies in womb, 22-25 weeks:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3G219nsWz0o>
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBnueIAIFgw>
 - <http://www.lifeissues.org/ultrasound/25weeks.htm>
- Average fetal weight and length chart: <http://www.babycenter.com/average-fetal-length-weight-chart>
- Article on successful heart surgery performed on preborn child at 31 weeks at Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto: http://www.mountsinai.on.ca/about_us/news/2009/first-in-canada-baby-has-heart-procedure-while-inside-her-mother2019s-womb-and-is-now-doing-fine

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