Supreme Court to Hear Historic Abortion Case Today

Today, the United States Supreme Court will have oral arguments on Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt (formerly Whole Woman's Health v. Cole) concerning Texas’ 2013 law that mandates abortion facilities to meet basic health and safety standards.

"At stake are not only laws such as Wisconsin's which mandates higher safety standards for abortion facilities, but also the nebulous 'undue burden' test originally stated in Planned Parenthood v. Casey that affects all abortion laws around the country," stated Heather Weininger, Executive Director of Wisconsin Right to Life. "This case is incredibly important, not only for the health and safety of women when it comes to the current sub-par standards of abortion facilities, but also for how any abortion law is measured by the courts."

Because of the passing of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, the Supreme Court now only has 8 sitting members. This means that if the Supreme Court makes a decision on Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt and there is a split opinion, Wisconsin's own admitting privileges law would be subject to the 7th Circuit Court's ruling striking down the protective law. However, Texas' law would remain standing under the 5th Circuit Court's ruling upholding it, and overall there would be no precedent set for either state. The Supreme Court can also
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decide to hold their decision until their next term.

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Media Contact: Heather Weininger 414-778-5780

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