

PAYING FOR WORKERS' ABORTIONS IS A MINEFIELD

Bill Donohue

In the run-up to the Supreme Court overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, and in its aftermath, many of the nation's top corporations announced they would pay for abortions in their healthcare plans.

Their goal is to short-circuit states which have already elected to pass restrictive abortion legislation, or planned on doing so. These woke corporations said they will pay the travel expenses for an employee's abortion. They announced this before President Biden said he would use Medicaid to help women get abortions out of state if they live in a state that has banned abortion.

The ruling class loves virtue signaling. They will soon change their tune once they are faced with the realities of their decision. Make no mistake, they have created an ethical and legal minefield for themselves.

On the ethical front, how do these companies explain their total lack of interest in paying women to access adoption services? If they are truly pro-choice, why is this option not being funded?

Peter Rex is founder and CEO of Rex, a Florida-based entity that builds and invests in tech companies. He, along with the Texas-based insurance company, Buffer, is paying for adoptions, "as well as covering the full costs of birth for employees who keep their children." He chides the woke companies. "These businesses are ignoring the possibility that many employees may simply need a little more help to carry their baby to term."

Rex is putting his money where his mouth is, saying that “my business has decided to give up to \$7,500 to employees who want to have their baby and give it up for adoption.” But adoption is not something that moves the ruling class the way aborting children does.

Some of these companies are in a race to show how courageously woke they are. For example, of the 101 companies we list, 11 also offer to pay for “gender-affirming care” (they are highlighted). Patagonia is even offering to pay for the “Training and bail for those who peacefully protest for reproductive justice.”

How this is going to play out legally remains to be seen.

Peter Bamburger, a business professor at Tel Aviv University, sees lots of problems on the horizon. “Even before dealing with the bigger issues—reputational harm, political retribution and exposure to legal liability—associated with using employee benefits to help employees access abortion services, employers are going to have to be prepared to face off against a byzantine mix of bureaucratic, legal and tax challenges.”

The minefield is actually worse than what he describes.

Will workers sue for discrimination saying their decision to explore adoption services are not being funded? What if those who “transition” to the other sex decide they want to detransition, citing mental health issues? If pro-abortion protesters who are locked up are entitled to bail benefits, how can pro-life protesters be treated any differently?

If an employee wants to travel to another state to obtain an abortion, how can she protect her privacy interests? How can the company insure that her co-workers won’t find out? Will her boss know the reason for her absence?

How will the company know she is really pregnant, and not just

seeking to get a vacation on their dime? Will they demand she submit to a pregnancy test? Will she be entitled to “loss of pregnancy” benefits (Vox Media does) if she is depressed after her abortion? Can part-time workers get this benefit?

Will a Texas man who claims to be a woman be given money to travel to his hometown in New York for his abortion? Or will he be denied funding on the basis that a man can’t get pregnant and therefore cannot have an abortion? What a sweet lawsuit that would be.

This is hardly an exaggeration. In 2020, the Association of LGBTQ Journalists awarded Samantha Schmidt an Excellence in Journalism award for her 2019 story in the Washington Post. The online title of her piece was, “A Mother, But Not a Woman.” The man she wrote about insisted on being called “they.”

Companies should stay out of politics and just attend to business, providing for basic healthcare services. But if they insist on doing otherwise, workers should demand what Impossible Foods says it will cover: in addition to travel, it pays for lodging, meals and child care for employees who travel out of state to get their abortion. Employees should not settle for fast food—go to the best steakhouse in town and enjoy a fine bottle of wine.

One final piece of advice. After the worker has enjoyed her stay she should go home and tell her boss she met a pro-life activist who convinced her not to kill her kid. If the company demands to be reimbursed, she should sue them for violating her pro-choice rights.