

VICTORY FOR CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

On June 26, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a California law requiring crisis pregnancy centers to inform women about the availability of abortion and contraception was unconstitutional. The 5-4 ruling was narrowly drawn and did not decide related issues.

Writing for the majority, Justice Clarence Thomas found the law to be an unconstitutional abridgment of the free speech rights of the crisis pregnancy centers. The law was not content neutral. Indeed, it was content based, meaning that it specifically targeted the speech of these abortion-alternative centers.

The majority noted that under the law, “licensed clinics must provide a government-drafted script about the availability of state-sponsored services...One of those services is abortion—the very practice that petitioners are devoted to opposing.” Thus, the ruling said, “the licensed notice plainly ‘alters the content’ of the petitioners’ speech.”

This was a significant victory for the pro-life community. Those who are principled defenders of free speech also had reason to celebrate.