

July 10, 2020: Judicial Advocacy Update

U.S. Supreme Court strikes down admitting-privilege restrictions

In *June Medical v. Russo*, the court agreed with plaintiff physicians who said the law linking their ability to perform abortions with having admitting privilege to a hospital not further than 30 miles away placed an "undue burden" on their patients' rights. The court issued the same ruling in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, a case decided in June 2016.

"Today's decision is a victory for patients and a strike against government interference in the patient-physician relationship," said AMA President Susan R. Bailey, MD. "There is no evidence that Louisiana's admitting privileges requirement improves patients' safety, and we are pleased by the U.S. Supreme Court's finding that such regulations are constitutionally invalid." Dr. Bailey added that the Louisiana law "interferes with clinical judgment and obstructs women's access to abortion services in the state." The court ruled in the *Whole Woman's Health* case that there was a "virtual absence of any health benefit" to such admitting-privilege laws. This point was noted in an amicus brief filed by the AMA and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists regarding *June Medical v. Russo*. The brief was joined by the American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Physicians and nine other health care professional societies. Read the full story.

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