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### **OHIO SUPREME COURT ASKED TO BLOCK PERSONHOOD FROM MOVING FORWARD**

COLUMBUS –Healthy Families Ohio, a coalition fighting a proposal that would establish legal rights for fertilized eggs, asked the Ohio Supreme Court today to block supporters from gathering the signatures needed to qualify for the November ballot until changes are made.

Opponents argue that the measure should be split in two because it seeks to change two sections of the Ohio Constitution and they contend that the summary used to explain its impact to voters is not “fair and truthful.”

Pushed by Personhood Ohio, the proposed constitutional amendment seeks to give fertilized eggs the same legal and constitutional rights as people. It would ban abortion and contains no exemptions for victims of rape and incest. Further, it could outlaw many commonly used forms of birth control and severely restrict safe and effective infertility treatments such as in vitro fertilization (IVF).

The lawsuit comes after Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine ruled the amendment summary is fair and accurate, clearing the way for Personhood Ohio to begin gathering the 385,425 valid signatures needed to put the proposed amendment before voters in November.

In the lawsuit, Healthy Families Ohio said, “By certifying the summary of the Proposed Amendment is fair and truth, the Attorney General abused his discretion and/or clearly disregarded applicable law.”

The bulk of the controversy centers on the part of the summary stating that the proposed amendment “will not affect genuine contraction ... human eggs or oocytes” ... and “reproductive technology or IVF procedures that respect the right to life of newly created human beings.”



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According to the lawsuit:

- Voters could interpret “genuine contraception” to not include the Pill or IUD. Because they can work to prevent implantation after fertilization, they could be banned if Personhood is passed by voters.
- In vitro fertilization “almost invariably involves the destruction of some very early embryos. Voters should be made aware of this critical fact in order for them to truly understand the potential limitations of this ‘exception.’”

The lawsuit asks the high court to declare that the summary is not fair and truthful, order that it be divided into two separate ballot issues, instruct the Ohio Secretary of State to not accept the faulty petitions and instruct supporters to stop collecting signatures until it rules on the case.

The case was filed on behalf of Healthy Families Ohio.

Healthy Families Ohio is an emerging coalition of medical and legal experts, faith leaders and community leaders dedicated to promoting the health of Ohio families by defeating Personhood.

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