**NACN-USA Celebrates SCOTUS Decision in Support of Religious Freedom**

The National Association of Catholic Nurses-U.S.A. hails the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court in support of the religious freedom of the owners of Conestoga Wood Specialties Corporation and Hobby Lobby Stores Incorporated. These family-owned businesses took the courageous stand of challenging the assault on their religious freedom under the guise of preventative health care, and the Contraceptive Mandate it imposed. While reason would tell us that the Constitution of the United States would demand no less of an affirmation of religious freedom by the Justices of the Supreme Court, the lengths to which the assault on religious liberty have escalated by the federal government, as well as by the judicial activism of other courts, gave reason for grave concern. The federal government had argued that for-profit corporations, and even the individuals running them as incorporators, lose their right to religious freedom. Specifically, in its legal arguments, the federal government refused to acknowledge that corporations can have a conscience.

The Contraceptive Mandate of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, requiring virtually all employers to provide contraceptive, abortifacient and surgical sterilization insurance coverage, at no cost to the employees, regardless of the deeply held moral objections of employers, represented a landmark violation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.   The bias against persons of faith should give all members of this great land, founded in the name of freedom, great pause.  This bias became even more evident when it is understood that at the same time the federal government is willing to respect the rights of corporations which refuse to sell tobacco, or engage in efforts to promote environmental conservation.

In celebrating this reaffirmation of the United States Constitution, and all that it has been established to protect, The National Association of Catholic Nurses, U.S.A. also wishes to thank the families of the Conestoga Wood Specialties Corporation and Hobby Lobby Stores Incorporated for their courage in defending the sacred right of religious freedom at great fiscal peril. The NACN-USA was a party to the amicus brief in support of the rights of these two companies, and thus takes great joy in this decision.