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City Attorney Zach Klein Announces City Files Motions in Two Additional Cases to Defend Rules Protecting Personal Medical Information

City seeks to intervene in Missouri and Tennessee cases where several Attorneys General, including Ohio's, are suing to eliminate privacy protections for women seeking reproductive care

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced that the City of Columbus filed motions to intervene in federal lawsuits to defend HIPAA's 2024 privacy rules protecting personal health information of patients seeking lawful reproductive healthcare. The cases, filed in Missouri and Tennessee, see multiple state attorneys general, including Ohio's, seeking to eliminate protections that ensure employers, law enforcement, prosecutors and other actors cannot easily obtain sensitive medical records for those who obtain legal care from licensed medical professionals.

Columbus [filed similar motions in two separate cases out of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas](#) in January.

“When a patient seeks medical care, that information should be private. Yet we continue to see state attorneys general—including our own here in Ohio—filing lawsuits to weaken or even eliminate these protections, which would open up private health information to employers, prosecutors and law enforcement. That’s just not right,” said **Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein**. “Patients should seek the care they need without the threat of someone watching over their shoulder. That’s why the City is seeking to intervene in these cases to defend federal rules that protect everyone.”

With its filings with the U.S. District Courts in Missouri and Tennessee, the City is seeking to join these cases to defend the HIPAA rules because of the impact they would have on the City’s health department, which provides reproductive care to Columbus residents daily through screenings, treatment, contraceptive services, pregnancy testing and other medical services. The department also plays a pivotal role in intervening in human trafficking cases, providing critical care and sexual health services to survivors.

If the 2024 HIPAA rules are rolled back, the department's efforts, especially regarding human trafficking cases, could be compromised as fewer residents would seek the help and services that they need due to privacy concerns.

Eroding HIPAA regulations would mean that patients would have no assurances that their personal medical information pertaining to lawful reproductive health services is safeguarded or being improperly disclosed to anyone, from employers to law enforcement or other actors who would want access to medical data.

The City of Madison, Wisconsin, and Doctors for America joined Columbus to file these motions.