IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA ATLANTA DIVISION

IN RE GEORGIA SENATE BILL 202

Master Case No.: 1:21-MI-55555-JPB

PRIVATE PLAINTIFFS' RESPONSE TO STATE DEFENDANTS' NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITY

On July 18, 2024, State Defendants filed a notice of supplemental authority concerning two recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, along with extensive, inappropriate argument, asserting that each case confirms that summary judgment should be entered in their favor because Private Plaintiffs¹ lack standing. ECF No. 876 at 1. The State Defendants' unilateral filing of additional summary judgment argument, without leave of Court, is procedurally improper and should be disregarded.² But should the Court choose to consider State Defendants'

¹ Private Plaintiffs for the purposes of this Response include the named private plaintiffs in the following cases: *Ga. State Conf. of the NAACP v. Raffensperger*, 1:21-CV-1259; *Sixth Dist. of the Afr. Methodist Episcopal Church v. Kemp*, 1:21-CV-1284; *Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Atlanta v. Raffensperger*, 1:21-CV-1333; and *The Concerned Black Clergy of Metro. Atlanta Inc. v. Raffensperger*, 1:21-CV-1728.

² It is well established that "notices of supplemental authority should not make legal argument." *Minus v. Miami-Dade Cnty.*, No. 19-cv-25113-BLOOM/Louis, 2021 WL 1185683, at *1 (S.D. Fla. Mar. 26, 2021). "[S]upplemental filings should do

supplemental brief, Private Plaintiffs respond briefly here to provide the Court with appropriate context as it considers the fully-briefed summary judgment papers.³ Importantly, neither recent Supreme Court case calls for any departure from existing standing jurisprudence nor contradicts, undermines, or narrows the well-accepted case law which, as detailed in Plaintiffs' Opposition (*see* ECF No. 826), supports rejection in its entirety of State Defendants' Motion for Summary Judgment on Jurisdiction.

nothing more" than "direct the Court's attention to legal authority or evidence that was not available" when the party initially filed its brief and "note the argument to which the legal authorities or evidence relate." Girard v. Aztec RV Resort, Inc., No. 10-62298-CIV, 2011 WL 4345443, at *2 (S.D. Fla. Sept. 16, 2011). Here, it is plain that State Defendants' "Notice of Supplemental Authority does not merely identify a relevant case but rather comments on that case," and as such "the filing impermissibly adds pages to [their] Motion for Summary Judgment." Wall v. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, No. 6:21-CV-975-PGB-DCI, 2021 WL 4948143, at *2 (M.D. Fla. Oct. 19, 2021); see also L.R. 56.1 (parties shall not be permitted to file supplemental summary judgment briefs or materials without an order of court). State Defendants submitted a nine-page filing that is largely pure legal argument, which includes an entire section of legal argument titled "Impact of Supreme Court Decisions on Existing Precedent" citing only cases decided long before State Defendants submitted their reply briefs in support of their motions for summary judgment. See ECF No. Doc. 876 at 8-9. As such, State Defendants' Notice of Supplemental Authority is procedurally improper and should be disregarded.

³ State Defendants' general arguments did not indicate which complaints or parties it believes are affected by the recent Supreme Court decisions. To the extent this Court seeks more detailed briefing about how, if at all, these decisions specifically affect certain complaints and/or claims in any of the pending cases, Private Plaintiffs request the opportunity for more fulsome briefing.

I. FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine

In FDA v. Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine, the plaintiff associations and individual doctors sued the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") to rescind the drug mifepristone's approval and modifications to its conditions of use. FDA v. All. for Hippocratic Med., 602 U.S. 367, 376-377 (2024). The plaintiffs had never prescribed nor used mifepristone, nor confronted any complications from its use; they were unregulated parties who had ideological objections to mifepristone and sought to challenge FDA's regulation of it. Id. at 372. Ultimately, the Court rejected all of the plaintiffs' theories of standing as unsupported and too speculative. As the Court stated, "citizens and doctors do not have standing to sue simply because others are allowed to engage in certain activities." Id. at 392-393. Had it accepted the standing theories, the Court reasoned that, eventually, "virtually every citizen [would have] standing to challenge virtually every government action that they do not like." Id.

Specifically, the plaintiffs argued that FDA's regulation of mifepristone might cause conscience injuries to the individual doctors and the specified members of the medical associations because they might be forced, against their consciences, to render emergency treatment to someone suffering complications from mifepristone. *Id.* at 386-388. But the Court found that existing federal law fully protects doctors from being required to treat patients in any way that would violate their consciences.

Id. at 386-387. Moreover, the plaintiffs failed to show that doctors could be forced to participate in any treatment over their conscience objections and could not identify any circumstance in which their conscience protections had actually been unavailable. *Id.* at 388-389.

The plaintiffs also contended that FDA's relaxed regulation of mifepristone may cause downstream economic injuries to the doctors. *Id.* at 390-393. The plaintiff doctors cited theoretical monetary and related injuries that they *might* suffer as a result of FDA's actions, including diverting resources and time from other patients to treat patients with mifepristone complications, increasing risk of liability suits from treating those patients, and potentially increasing insurance costs. *Id.* The Supreme Court likewise rejected these allegations as no evidence supported the likelihood of any one of the links in the chain of events occurring.

Finally, the plaintiffs asserted organizational standing based on theories that FDA's relaxed regulation of mifepristone causes injuries to medical associations themselves, but the Supreme Court also found these theories unavailing. *Id.* at 393-396 (citing *Havens Realty Corp. v. Coleman*, 455 U.S. 363 (1982)). The plaintiffs argued that organizational standing exists whenever an organization spends its resources in response to a defendant's actions. *All. for Hippocratic Med.*, 602 U.S. at 393-396. But the Court explained that *Havens* does not provide that "all the organizations in America . . . have standing to challenge almost every federal policy

that they dislike, provided they spend a single dollar opposing those policies." *Id.* at 395. The Supreme Court noted that the plaintiff organization in *Havens* diverted resources in response to actions that "directly affected and interfered with [the plaintiff's] core business activities." *Id.* (explaining that the plaintiff "not only was an issue-advocacy organization, but also operated a housing counseling service" that was "perceptibly impaired" by illegal racial steering). The Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine plaintiffs did not allege a similar type of injury, and no evidence suggested that FDA's actions concerning mifepristone "imposed any similar impediment to the medical associations' advocacy businesses." Id.4 Those plaintiffs simply disagreed with the FDA's decisions as "concerned bystanders" without a concrete stake in the dispute. Id. at 382. In other words, the Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine plaintiffs had an almost uniquely weak case for establishing organizational standing under Havens.

The opposite is true for Private Plaintiffs here, who include individuals directly regulated by the challenged provisions of S.B. 202 and direct service providers, not merely ideological opponents. The individual plaintiffs in these consolidated cases assert direct – not downstream – injuries. *See* ECF No. 826 at

⁴And while the medical associations claimed that the FDA's failure to collect and disseminate information about mifepristone made their function of informing the public more difficult, their lawsuit did not assert informational injury, but rather sought to invalidate the drug's approval. *Id.* at 395-396.

68-74. Meanwhile, the organizational plaintiffs' missions include the protection of voting rights and advocating for and educating citizens about public policy issues and the voting process. See id. at 14-68. Consistent with their missions, the organizational plaintiffs have diverted their finite resources to counteract the unconstitutional and wrongful acts of Defendants, including to educate members and their communities about the challenged provisions of S.B. 202 so that these regulated voters – to whom the new restrictions apply and who have already been impacted by them - could exercise their right to vote. See id. The organizational plaintiffs' core missions were directly affected and interfered with by S.B. 202's restrictions on voters, evidence that was missing in Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine. Moreover, the organizational plaintiffs predate S.B. 202, have provided services to Georgia voters both prior and subsequent to S.B. 202's passage, and were not formed merely to oppose the statute. In no respect are they "spending their way" into standing. ECF No. 876 at 4-5.

State Defendants assert that "organizational standing cannot exist in every instance where an organization spends funds pursuing education or advocacy." ECF No. 876 at 2. This argument obfuscates the point. Organizational standing exists where, as here, Defendants' illegal acts impair the organizational plaintiffs' ability to engage in their programs by forcing them to divert resources to counteract those illegal acts. *See, e.g.,* ECF No. 826 at 11-14. And *Alliance for Hippocratic*

Medicine did not disturb Havens' holding that organizational standing exists where a defendant's "actions directly affected and interfered with [a plaintiff-organization's] core business activities." All. for Hippocratic Med., 602 U.S. at 395.

Contrary to State Defendants' assertions, nothing is speculative about the harms that have occurred and will continue to occur from S.B. 202 here. Voters have already had to navigate the voting restrictions; these restrictions have already led to instances of voting difficulties and even disenfranchisement; and the organizational plaintiffs have already had to divert resources to respond. ECF No. 826 at 19-74 (explaining and substantiating injuries Plaintiff-by-Plaintiff). State Defendants' new submission nowhere attempts to apply Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine to these facts of record. And, of course, Private Plaintiffs need show standing only as to one Private Plaintiff in order to support each claim, as they have plainly done here. See id. at 11. In other words, Private Plaintiffs have "show[n] a predictable chain of events leading from the government action to the asserted injury." Hippocratic Med., 602 U.S. at 385. As the Supreme Court explained in Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine, "in 'many cases the standing question can be answered chiefly by comparing the allegations of the particular complaint to those made in prior standing cases." *Id.* at 384 (internal citations omitted). As extensive case law illustrates, where the government limits the ways in which citizens can cast a vote, that new limit may cause harm to individual voters and the organizations dedicated to educating and helping voters access the franchise, thus substantiating standing for those organizations. *See, e.g., Fla. State Conf. of NAACP v. Browning*, 522 F.3d 1153, 1165 (11th Cir. 2008); *Common Cause/Georgia v. Billups*, 554 F.3d 1340, 1350 (11th Cir. 2009).

At bottom, the Supreme Court's comments about organizational standing in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine* have no bearing on this case. Principally, they reaffirmed that *Havens*, and the organizational standing set out therein, remains good law.

II. Murthy v. Missouri

Consistent with most traceability and redressability-heavy analyses, *Murthy v. Missouri*, is a fact-intensive ruling. There, the individual and state plaintiffs sued various Executive Branch officials and agencies, alleging that they pressured social media platforms to censor their speech in violation of the First Amendment and moved to enjoin the defendants from pressuring platforms to censor future speech. *Murthy v. Missouri*, 144 S. Ct. 1972, 1981 (2024). Notably, the plaintiffs did not sue the social media platforms who restricted their content, only the officials and agencies allegedly "behind it." *Id.* at 1984.

While the lower courts determined that the defendant officials likely "coerced" or "significantly encouraged" the social media platforms "to such extent that their content-moderation decisions should be deemed to be the decisions of the

Government," (id. (internal punctuation omitted)), the Supreme Court overturned this conclusion. First, the plaintiffs' claims largely lacked evidence suggesting—let alone proving—that any social medical platforms had ever removed content in response to government pressure in the past. Id. at 1987. The platforms were already engaged in content moderation before any discussions with the government officials and agencies and had independent motives for removing content. *Id.* In some instances, the platforms had moderated the content and restricted the accounts of the plaintiffs before the government had communicated with them. Id. at 1992. In other words, "there was no likelihood of any future injury based on past conduct" (ECF No. 876 at 5-6) because the evidence that the government's past conduct had ever caused injury was *de minimis* and weak. If a plaintiff demonstrates that a particular Government defendant was behind her past social-media restriction, it will be easier for her to prove that she faces a continued risk of future restriction that is likely to be traceable to that same defendant." Murthy, 144 S. Ct. at 1987. Second, the plaintiffs did not present evidence of an ongoing pressure campaign by the defendants that would suggest a risk of future content suppression—there was no evidence of relevant government communications with the social media platforms. Id. at 1993. Therefore, "it [was] entirely speculative that the platforms' future moderation decisions [would] be attributable, even in part, to the defendants." *Id*.

Not only was there no causal link based on the facts in that case between the

plaintiffs' alleged injuries and the defendants' actions, but the plaintiffs also failed to show their injuries were redressable by the defendants. *Id.* at 1995. The plaintiffs requested judicial relief in the form of an injunction stopping the defendant agencies and officials from pressuring the platforms to suppress speech. *Id.* Even if the Court had enjoined the defendants from interfering with the platforms' application of their own policies, the platforms would have remained free to enforce, or not to enforce, their policies and would not have been obligated to follow any legal determination the suit produced. *Id.* Enjoining the defendants would not likely affect the non-party platforms' content moderation decisions. *Id.* at 1995-1996.

Unlike in *Murthy*, the instant case does not "require guesswork as to how independent [non-party] decisionmakers will exercise their judgment." *Id.* at 1986. The county elections officials—whom State Defendants claim are the ones making some of the decisions as to implementing the elections laws at issue—are not only parties to the action, but also are under the direction and control of State Defendants who are possessed with the oversight of and authority over the voting process in Georgia. *See* ECF No. 826 at 80-96. All the injuries Private Plaintiffs here allege from the various challenged provisions are real, nonspeculative, and traceable to State Defendants. *Id.* Moreover, as carefully detailed in Private Plaintiffs' prior briefs, enjoining State Defendants as to any one of S.B. 202's challenged provisions is likely to result in Plaintiffs obtaining the relief—discontinuation of the application

of unconstitutional laws—requested. *Id.* Unlike in *Murthy*, where the companies had their own policies and enforced them regardless of the governmental defendants' communications, there is no evidence that the counties here operate independent policies impervious to the State's direction. Just the opposite: the counties have been largely bystanders in this litigation and have not even moved for summary judgment or appealed the Court's injunction against them, relying instead, entirely on the State's interpretations. In short, the Court's highly fact-intensive analysis in *Murthy* is irrelevant to the completely different facts presented by this case, breaks no new ground, and should not affect this Court's standing analysis.

In summary, neither of these Supreme Court decisions supports entering summary judgment on jurisdiction for State Defendants as each are distinguishable from the facts in the instant case. Both *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine* and *Murthy* are consistent with the precedent already presented to this Court in summary judgment briefing and State Defendants' Motion should be denied.

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CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to L.R. 7.1(D), the undersigned hereby certifies that the foregoing Private Plaintiffs' Response to State Defendants' Notice of Supplemental Authority, has been prepared in Times New Roman 14, a font and type selection approved by the Court in L.R. 5.1(B).

/s/Laurence Pulgram

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