



Laura Belin <desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com>

seeking comment: multi-state legal actions

Laura Belin <desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com>

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To: "Garrett, Pat" <pat.garrett@iowa.gov>

Dear Pat,

Through records the Attorney General's office provided in response to my Chapter 22 request, I have learned that Governor Reynolds has declined AG Miller's request to join nine multi-state legal actions since June. I understand that Governor Reynolds supports Indiana's abortion ban. For a Bleeding Heartland post in progress, I'm seeking comment and clarification on the governor's thought process regarding the other eight cases.

1. Governor Reynolds declined to allow Iowa to join amicus briefs on whether Title VII prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

As you may know, employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity has been illegal in Iowa since 2007. Governor Reynolds was not serving in the legislature when those amendments to the Iowa Civil Rights Act passed. Does the governor believe employers should be able to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity? For instance, should an employer be able to fire an employee, or not hire an applicant, after learning the person is gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender?

2. Governor Reynolds declined to allow Iowa to join an amicus brief related to health and safety standards in the facilities where immigrant children are confined.

Does Governor Reynolds have any concerns about reports indicating that many children lack regular access to showers, clean clothes, soap, toothbrushes, bedding, diapers, and/or sanitary products in those facilities?

Does Governor Reynolds have any concerns about the length of time children in those facilities (some of them preverbal toddlers) are separated from family members?

I'm trying to understand whether the governor thinks that there are no problems with the conditions immigrant children are living in, or the length of time they are confined, or whether she didn't want Iowa to join this brief for some other reason.

3. The governor declined to allow Iowa to join an amicus brief in a case involving an expedited removal process for immigrants. The rule being challenged allows fast-track deportation of immigrants nationwide without access to an attorney or a court hearing. Why does Governor Reynolds believe immigrants should be deported without any legal process? Expedited removal has led to some wrongful deportations in the past.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/25/opinion/politics/expedited-deportation-trump-immigration.html>

4. Governor Reynolds declined to allow Iowa to join an amicus brief in a *Grace v Barr*, a case related to asylum protections. This lawsuit is challenging a new Justice Department policy stating that asylum claims based on gang violence or domestic violence will generally be denied (overturning a standard that had been used for decades).

Does Governor Reynolds believe that people fleeing gang violence or domestic violence in their home countries should be block from applying from or receiving asylum in the U.S.?

5. Why didn't Governor Reynolds allow Iowa to join the lawsuit challenging the EPA's repeal of the Clean Power Plan? Isn't it in Iowa's best interests to have federal policy that promotes renewable energy (which we have in abundance) rather than power plants using fossil fuels (which need to be imported to Iowa)?

6. Governor Reynolds declined to allow Iowa to join an amicus brief related to California's ban of high-capacity magazines. Is the governor opposed to all regulations of high-capacity magazines anywhere in the U.S.? Would she veto any bill seeking to ban them in Iowa? Does she believe as a matter of principle that states should not have the authority to enact their own gun regulations?

7. I have the same question regarding the case related to New York City's ban on the transportation of firearms. Did Governor Reynolds decline because she doesn't support any city-level gun regulations of any kind?

8. Finally, why did Governor Reynolds refuse to allow Iowa to join a lawsuit over an EPA regulation barring people who receive EPA grants from serving on science advisory committees? That rule will exclude many academic scientists who have expertise in their fields while allowing corporate-funded scientists to serve.

Thanks in advance for any comment or clarification you can provide.

Yours,

Laura
1705 Plaza Circle
Windsor Heights, IA 50324
(515) 276-6971

<http://www.bleedingheartland.com>