

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI
501 EAST COURT STREET, SUITE 5.500
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI 39201



CARLTON W. REEVES
DISTRICT JUDGE

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April 11th, 2020

BY ECF

Re: *Jackson Women's Health Organization et al. v. Dobbs et al.*, No. 3:18-CV-171-CWR-FKB

Dear Counsel:

I hope this letter finds you well.

At the moment, it seems reasonable to expect plaintiffs to challenge the abortion restrictions in yesterday's Executive Order¹, and that challenge will be brought within this case. Similar orders have had to be litigated in Alabama, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas—and more may be on the horizon.

Before we go down that expensive and time-consuming path, I wanted to write and see if there was another way forward.

The Alabama litigation is of particular interest. There, Judge Thompson initially entered a TRO enjoining Alabama's pandemic-related abortion restrictions. Upon receiving additional information from the State Health Officer, however, he issued a clarifying Opinion and Order limiting the scope of the injunction. *See Robinson v. Marshall*, No. 2:19-cv-365, Docket No. 111 (M.D. Ala. Apr. 3, 2020). I appreciated so much Judge Thompson's point that we can abide by the Constitution *and* "adapt to the exigent circumstances caused by the global pandemic." *Id.* at 10.

Both sides will litigate to protect their clients' respective interests. I understand that. But if similar clarification from our own State Health Officer could help us avoid all the litigation and upheaval our sister state has experienced, then it might be in the best interest of the Mississippians we serve. And I know the talented and committed attorneys on this case will make their best effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carlton W. Reeves". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "C".

¹ For any out-of-state readers, no, Governor Reeves and I are not related. Mississippi is small but not *that* small.