



December 3, 2014

Our Doctors Stand With Peggy Young and Pregnant Workers Everywhere!

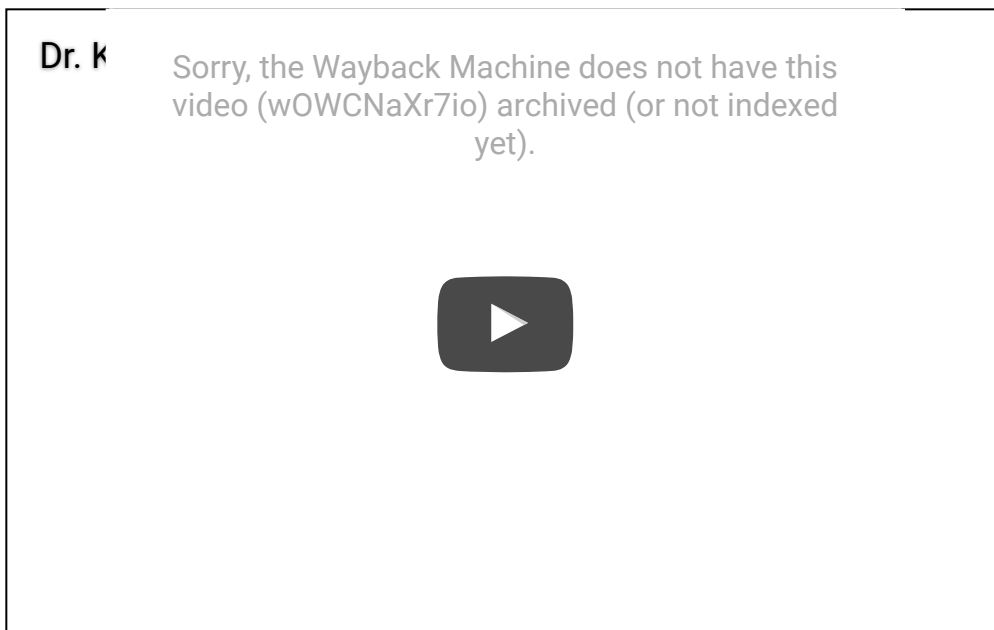


Dr. Morrell speaking on the steps of the Supreme Court

steps of the Supreme Court:


Today, December 3, the Supreme Court hears oral arguments in *Peggy Young v. UPS*, a pregnancy discrimination case that will determine whether and when the Pregnancy Discrimination Act requires an employer to make accommodations for a worker who needs them because of pregnancy. The decision in this case will have a major impact on the health and economic security of families across the country.

Our [Reproductive Health Advocacy Fellow Dr. Kathleen Morrell](#) gave a speech this morning at the rally on the



Dr. Morrell said:

*As a doctor my first and foremost responsibility is to my patients' health and well-being, so **I am proud to be with all of you today** in support of Peggy Young and other pregnant women.*

 [Dr. Morrell with her #StandWithPeggy sign](#)
Dr. Morrell with her #StandWithPeggy sign

*While I am proud to stand here today in support, I am angry because we shouldn't **have** to be here defending pregnant women.*

*Employers should be giving these accommodations without question. **Not just because it keeps a woman healthy, but because it is simply the right thing to do.***


[Read the rest of Dr. Morrell's speech here.](#)

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Physicians **contributed to the development of an *amicus brief*** from health care providers in support of Peggy Young. Physicians signed onto the brief with organizations that include the American Nurses Association, the National Partnership for Women and Families, and other concerned organizations. [Read and download it here.](#)

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Four of our [Leadership Training Academy Fellows](#) share their own stories:

 **Lyndsey Benson MD** **Lyndsey Benson, MD, MS:** One of my patients, Jennifer (not her real name), was 30 weeks pregnant and worked in a grocery store. She was experiencing preterm contractions, a condition that was exacerbated by her work in the stock room unloading shipments and moving heavy boxes. I offered to write a letter to her employer, asking them for a temporary accommodation for my patient, namely, restricting her from lifting more than 20 pounds. But Jennifer adamantly refused. She told me, "I talked to my boss and they have no other job for me. So it's either the stock room or I lose my job, and I need this job." I felt powerless to help her. My patients should not be forced to choose between safely continuing their pregnancy and keeping their job.

Ashlee Bergin, MD: My patient, whom I'll call Anna, worked as a retail cashier. At 26 weeks pregnant, she was having difficulty standing on her feet for long periods of time, a requirement of her job. Her manager informed her that she couldn't use a stool, nor could she drink water or use the bathroom during her shift.

Because her job refused Anna these basic accommodations, she fainted while at work, hit her head, and had to come to the hospital for evaluation. Fortunately, she was fine, but her employer did not want her to return to work. All of this could have been avoided had she been allowed water and a stool. No woman should ever have to choose between her job and her pregnancy.

 **Bhavik Stand With PeggyCROP**

Bhavik Kumar, MD: During her 20 week pregnancy visit, one of my regular patients shared with me that she was discouraged by her work situation at a coffee shop chain. She was determined to work throughout her pregnancy, but recently her boss wouldn't allow her to sit while at the register or use the bathroom when she needed to. I began advocating for her to be granted these small accommodations so that she would be able to stay at her job without threatening the health of her pregnancy. Thankfully, her employer eventually offered these accommodations and my patient was able to continue working until 38 weeks of pregnancy. No woman should fear losing her job because she needs to use the bathroom more frequently during pregnancy. For me, this is a matter of basic human rights.


Lisa Hofler, MD, MPH: I went to school for a long time and worked really hard to get the training I needed to take the best possible care of my patients. But in addition to using my skills as a doctor to help keep them healthy, monitor their pregnancies, and talk to them about their bodies and their babies, I have had to incorporate something unexpected into my patient visits: writing notes.

"Please allow Stephanie to use the restroom whenever she needs."

"Christina is required to stay well-hydrated while pregnant. Please allow her to carry her water bottle while at work."

"Please allow Samantha to sit down at her cash register while at work."

My patients are grown adults who are trying to do their jobs and support their families. It is ridiculous that so many employers require these notes, and even more ridiculous that women are being denied these basic rights.

 **Current Leadership Training Academy Fellow Dr. Serina Floyd and Dr. Morrell at the #StandWithPeggy rally**

Current Leadership Training Academy Fellow Dr. Serina Floyd and Dr. Morrell at the #StandWithPeggy rally

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