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UPDATED: USAID v AOSI: Supreme Court rules in favor of free speech

WASHINGTON (June 20, 2013) – This morning, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-2 in [InterAction's](#) favor in the case of [USAID v AOSI](#). This case, in which InterAction is a co-plaintiff, challenged a 2003 law that requires all groups receiving U.S government funds for international HIV and AIDS work to have “a policy explicitly opposing prostitution.”

“This is a major legal victory. We are thrilled that the Supreme Court upheld by 6-2 that a U.S. government policy requirement is unconstitutional because it violates Americans’ right to free speech. This ruling means that the government cannot force groups to embrace their political views as a requirement for funding,” said Samuel A. Worthington, president and CEO of InterAction.

Other co-plaintiffs in the case are the Alliance for Open Society International, Pathfinder International and the Global Health Council. Ten amicus briefs were submitted in support of the respondents, spanning progressive and conservative voices.

The policy requirement affected the ability to provide life-saving health services to vulnerable populations in the fight against HIV and AIDS and prevented NGOs from speaking freely in the important debate over how best to prevent the spread of the disease.

“While we agree that the government can say how it wants its money spent, this requirement went far beyond that by shutting down research and debate on important topics. We are heartened by the Supreme Court’s strong support for our position and are ready to continue our partnership with the U.S. government to save lives,” said Worthington.

“If it had been implemented, this requirement would have opened the door to government restrictions and regulation of funds that InterAction members raise privately from the generous American public. Thankfully, that will not happen. Justice Roberts made very clear that the policy requirement violated the First Amendment which we hold so dear,” added Worthington.

Attorneys from the international law firm [WilmerHale](#) represented the plaintiffs in the case, which was argued before the court on April 22. For more information about the case, including a timeline and court filings and documents, visit www.pledgechallenge.org.

InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S.-based nongovernmental international organizations, with more than 180 members. Our members operate in every developing country, working with local communities to overcome poverty and suffering by helping to improve their quality of life. Visit www.interaction.org.