



# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEKLY

from  
**Americans for Freedom of Religion**

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## **New York's Gender Ideology Mandate Threatens Catholic Sisters' Cancer Care Facility**

For over a century, the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, NY, have provided nursing care and comfort to economically destitute terminal cancer patients. Now they face possible fines, loss of licensing, even jail time for noncompliance with New York State's transgender mandate.

According to the Catholic Benefits Association (CBA), "The New York gender ideology mandate requires Rosary Hill Home," the Sisters' 42-bed hospice, "and other long-term care facilities to house biological men in women's rooms even over the opposition of a female roommate;" to permit residents and visitors of one sex to access bathrooms of the opposite sex; "to use false pronouns;" and to have staff undergo "cultural competency" training in gender ideology.

The Sisters requested a religious exemption from these requirements that would, CBA explains, "infringe upon their Catholic values, burden their exercise of religion, and compromise their free speech rights."

Receiving no reply from the state, the Sisters filed a federal lawsuit against Gov. Kathy Hochul, Health Commissioner James McDonald, and several other state officials, arguing that the transgender mandate violates First and Fourteenth Amendment protections.

"We Sisters have taken care of patients from all walks of life, ideologies, and faiths," said Mother Marie Edward, General Superior of the Hawthorne Dominicans. "We treat each patient with dignity and Christian charity," but "we cannot implement New York's mandate without violating our Catholic faith." "New York's law provides religious exemption for long-term care facilities affiliated with the Christian Science Church," notes attorney Martin Nussbaum, "but not for similar Catholic facilities."

The lawsuit cites the Department of Health website reporting "zero complaints" and "zero citations" against Rosary Hill over the last four-year reporting period, contrasted with "more than 55,000 complaints against other nursing homes" and "an average of 23 citations" issued "to each nursing home in the state."

Yet it is Rosary Hill that is now threatened with closure—not because of its level of care, which is exemplary, but because Gov. Hochul and the State Health Department prioritize a radical gender ideology over care for indigent cancer patients.

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/2wp2bkwy>

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