



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Shannon Kingery
402.471.2067
shannon.kingery@nebraska.gov

Attorney General Bruning Discusses Second Day of Federal Health Care Reform Supreme Court Oral Argument

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning attended the second day of oral argument on the federal health care challenge before the U.S. Supreme Court. Today's argument focused on the individual mandate and whether the federal government has the right to force Americans to purchase health insurance or face a penalty. The penalty imposed takes effect in 2014. The states argued the mandate is unconstitutional because it oversteps the limitations of congressional authority. Attorney General Bruning had this to say about today's oral argument:

On the issues covered in today's oral argument:

"When the Founding Fathers drafted our Constitution they deliberately limited the federal government's power in order to protect individual liberty. The Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution does not grant Congress unlimited authority. If the mandate is upheld, the limits written into the Constitution restraining the federal government's power become meaningless."

On the happenings inside the court room:

"Several of the justices asked pointed questions about how the mandate could apply to the purchase of other goods or services. During the vigorous discussion, Justice Kennedy, considered by many to be a swing vote on this issue, indicated that this mandate changes the fundamental relationship between individuals and the government."

On the crowds outside the court:

"Americans understand the importance of this case and that is reflected in the large number of people gathering outside the court this week," said Attorney General Bruning.

Media links:

Attorney General Bruning's comments on oral argument on the individual mandate:

<http://www.ago.ne.gov/media/audio>

U.S. Supreme Court link to audio and transcript of today's oral argument:

http://www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/argument_audio_detail.aspx?argument=11-398-Tuesday

Photos from outside the U.S. Supreme Court: <http://www.ago.ne.gov/media/news>