SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE	ONLIED STATES
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UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR)
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ET AL.,)
Petitioners,)
v.) No. 19-177
ALLIANCE FOR OPEN SOCIETY)
INTERNATIONAL, INC., ET AL.,)
Respondents.)
	_

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Place: Washington, D.C.

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12	Washington, D.C.	
13	Tuesday, May 5, 2	020
14		
15	The above-entitled mat	ter came on
16	for oral argument before the Supre	me Court of
17	the United States at 10:00 a.m.	
18		
19	APPEARANCES:	
20	CHRISTOPHER G. MICHEL, Assistant t	o the Solicitor
21	General, Department of Justice	, Washington, D.C.
22	on behalf of the Petitioners.	
23	DAVID W. BOWKER, Esquire, Washingt	on, D.C.;
24	on behalf of the Respondents.	
25		

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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(10:00 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: This morning
4	we will hear argument in Case 19-177, United
5	States Agency for International Development
6	versus the Alliance for Open Society
7	International. I note at the outset that
8	Justice Kagan is recused in this case.
9	Mr. Michel.
LO	ORAL ARGUMENT OF CHRISTOPHER G. MICHEL
L1	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
L2	MR. MICHEL: Mr. Chief Justice, and
L3	may it please the Court:
L4	Twenty years ago, the HIV/AIDS
L5	pandemic was devastating the world. In
L6	response, President Bush proposed and Congress
L7	adopted the Leadership Act. Since reauthorized
L8	three times, the Act has committed nearly 80
L9	billion dollars to global AIDS relief, and it
20	has worked, saving more than 17 million lives in
21	the most successful American foreign aid effort
22	since the Marshall Plan.
23	The funding condition at issue here
24	requires recipients to have a policy opposing
25	prostitution and sex trafficking which Congress

found are coercive practices that spread 1 2 HIV/AIDS and degrade women and girls. Court held that applying that condition to 3 Respondents' domestic entities violates the 4 unconstitutional conditions doctrine. But 5 Respondents sought more, and the question now is 6 7 whether the condition can still be applied to foreign grant recipients operating abroad. 8 It can for two straightforward 9 10 reasons. Foreign entities lack constitutional 11 rights, so they cannot bring an unconstitutional conditions claim, and neither can Respondents 12 13 because they are not subject to the funding 14 condition. Thanks to their victory in this 15 Court, Respondents can accept and use funds 16 without any compelled speech. To be sure, 17 Respondents can choose to affiliate with foreign 18 entities that must comply with the policy condition, but any effect on Respondents' 19 2.0 message is now a product of their own choice, 2.1 not government compulsion. 2.2 Respondents' contrary view is 23 startling. They would allow U.S. non-profits to 24 export constitutional rights to legally separate

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foreign entities abroad simply because they

share similar brands. That novel theory has no 1 2 basis in this Court's prior decision, it could 3 undermine long-standing regulations of foreign 4 speech, and it has no practical justification. 5 For 17 years, foreign recipients have 6 adhered to the policy condition without harming 7 the AIDS relief program or Respondents' speech. This Court afforded Respondents all the relief they deserve. The decision below 9 10 should be reversed. 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Counsel, one thing that I think is not clear from the record 12 13 is the precise relationship between the domestic 14 entity and its foreign affiliates. We -- we 15 know that there are no formal corporate ties but that these entities share the same name, the 16 17 same logo, the same brand. 18 What -- what would you require beyond 19 that before attributing the speech of the 20 foreign entity to the domestic one? 2.1 MR. MICHEL: Mr. Chief Justice, you're

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correct that the record is not particularly

thorough on that issue, despite 15 years of

court ultimately entered the injunction it

litigation on -- on this matter. The district

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23

24

- 1 issued here based simply on -- on letter
- 2 briefing.
- But our position is that the formal
- 4 distinction between the two entities, the -- the
- 5 U.S. entity and the foreign entity, is all that
- 6 is required to attach separate legal rights.
- 7 Of course, it's important to note the
- 8 Respondents and the foreign entities that they
- 9 claim as affiliates made the choice to be
- 10 separate legal entities. That choice, of
- 11 course, has certain benefits for them, such as
- 12 shielding them from liability, but it also has
- 13 --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Is it --
- 15 MR. MICHEL: -- certain perks.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- is it
- 17 reasonable to insist on formal corporate ties in
- 18 this -- in this context?
- I gather that it's undisputed that to
- 20 be effective in many of the foreign countries
- 21 involved here, you have to operate through a
- 22 foreign entity, that the -- the effort would not
- 23 be as effective if the American entity were the
- one actually on the ground in the foreign
- 25 country.

MR. MICHEL: Well, two points on that, 1 Mr. Chief Justice. First, I think that that is 2 not true as a uniform matter. Many of the 3 4 Respondents, the U.S. entities do, in fact, 5 operate in foreign countries through branch 6 offices, and, as a result of this Court's prior 7 decision, they always have a choice to operate 8 in that way without compromising their speech in 9 any way. They are, in other words, completely 10 in charge of their own message while also accepting Leadership Act funds. 11 12 And -- and to take your second point, 13 if they make the choice to operate through a 14 foreign entity because they decide that that is 15 more convenient or more effective, they have to accept the bitter with the sweet, to be sure, 16 17 operating through a distinct legal entity, but 18 they're not without recourse. They can, for 19 example, explain that the policy statement being 2.0 issued by the foreign entity doesn't reflect 2.1 their own views. 2.2 Their free speech allows them to do 23 that. And I -- and I would note as --24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: But,

presumably -- presumably, it does reflect their

- own views. You know, they have the same name,
- 2 the same logo, the same brand.
- 3 And I wonder if it makes more sense to
- 4 think of the foreign entity as simply another
- 5 channel for the domestic entity's speech.
- 6 MR. MICHEL: Mr. Chief Justice, with
- 7 respect, I don't -- I don't think it does. And
- 8 I think, you know, when that was the only option
- 9 available, as it was in the Court's decision
- 10 last time, I can understand, of course, why the
- 11 Court decided the case the way it did.
- 12 But now that Respondents have a
- 13 separate choice, in fact, the very choice that
- 14 they were fighting for last time, any
- 15 consequences of the choice to operate as
- 16 separate entities is a result of their own
- 17 decisions.
- 18 And -- and I -- I --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you --
- MR. MICHEL: -- wanted to note --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- thank you.
- 22 Thank you, counsel.
- Justice Thomas?
- JUSTICE THOMAS: Mr. Michel, the
- 25 Respondent seems to argue that your guidelines

- 1 on -- your affiliate guidelines actually support 2 their argument. What do you think of that? MR. MICHEL: Justice Thomas, I -- I 3 4 don't think that they do as -- as an initial 5 matter and, even if they did, I think that 6 would, at most, be a basis for challenging the 7 guidelines, not -- not the constitutionality of 8 the statute. 9 And to start with the first point, the 10 guidelines, which are reproduced at -- at pages 11 1A through 3A of our reply brief, simply provide 12 that an entity can affiliate with a separate 13 entity that has a different policy on 14 prostitution and sex trafficking if it meets certain requirements, and -- and there are five 15 16 non-exhaustive requirements spelled out there. 17 Four of those would generally be 18 satisfied by an entity that has legal separation. So I think it would be a rare 19 2.0 circumstance that these regulations would ever 2.1 result in the denial of funding to a foreign 2.2 affiliate. 23 And -- and to make one related point,
- 23 And -- and to make one related point, 24 Respondents themselves are no longer subject to 25 the policy requirement as a result of their

- 1 prior decision in this case. So, if they run
- 2 afoul of these regulations, which simply
- 3 interpret what it means to have a policy
- 4 opposing prostitution and sex trafficking, these
- 5 regulations can't be a mechanism for depriving
- 6 the Respondents themselves of funds.
- 7 JUSTICE THOMAS: When this case was
- 8 here last, I seem to remember it was about the
- 9 domestic organization. The -- what has changed
- 10 since it was here?
- 11 The -- there was very little talk.
- 12 The only time that affiliates actually came up
- was as an alternative to the enforcement
- 14 procedures that were being used toward the
- 15 domestic organizations then.
- 16 So what has changed since this case
- 17 was here last?
- 18 MR. MICHEL: Well, Justice Thomas,
- 19 you're exactly right. That was all that was at
- 20 issue last time. And the only thing that has
- 21 changed is that Respondents have asked for
- 22 broader relief.
- 23 And although, you know, we fully
- 24 accept the Court's prior decision, we -- we --
- 25 we submit that Respondents are simply not

- 1 entitled to any further relief.
- 2 As you suggest, there's nothing in
- 3 this Court's decision that contemplates or
- 4 suggests applying the -- the prohibition on
- 5 applying the policy requirement to foreign
- 6 entities overseas, so I think the Court ought to
- 7 simply analyze the claim under first principles.
- 8 And, as I said at the outset, I think
- 9 two simple principles resolve the case.
- 10 Respondents themselves are not subject to a
- 11 funding condition, so they can't have an
- 12 unconstitutional conditions claim, and the
- foreign entities that are subject to the funding
- 14 condition have no constitutional rights, so they
- 15 can't have an unconstitutional condition claim
- 16 either.
- We do think that what Respondents are
- asking for is -- is unjustifiably bootstrapping
- 19 this Court's prior decision into global relief,
- and we simply don't think there's any basis for
- 21 that.
- JUSTICE THOMAS: Thank you.
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 24 Ginsburg?
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Michel, I have

- 1 two questions. The first is that the statute
- 2 exempts certain non-domestic entities from the
- 3 requirement to adopt an anti-prostitution
- 4 policy, and those are the Global Fund to Fight
- 5 AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the World Health
- 6 Organization, International AIDS Vaccine
- 7 Initiative, and any U.N. agency.
- What is the reason for the exemption?
- 9 Why are these organizations exempt and not the
- 10 organizations at issue here?
- 11 MR. MICHEL: Justice Ginsburg, I think
- there are a few reasons for that. Those are in
- the main international organizations that are
- 14 composed of their own separate sovereigns, and
- so I think it makes sense that Congress would
- have wanted to respect the sovereignty of the
- members of those organizations in a way that
- doesn't, of course, apply to non-profit
- 19 organizations receiving funds at issue here.
- 20 The -- the vaccine organization that
- 21 you mentioned as well seems to be particularly
- 22 unlikely to -- to bring into play the
- 23 considerations that motivated Congress to
- 24 require the anti-prostitution and sex
- 25 trafficking pledge because they're not operating

- in the field. They're simply doing research on
- 2 -- on vaccines. But I don't take --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: It -- it seems to
- 4 me that these organizations are doing the same
- 5 thing.
- 6 But let me ask you my second question,
- 7 and it is: May a pledge taker -- say you're
- 8 right and these foreign entities have to take
- 9 the pledge -- may they nonetheless work with
- 10 prostitutes to encourage the prostitutes to take
- 11 preventative measures that will advance control
- 12 of AIDS?
- 13 MR. MICHEL: The answer to that
- 14 question --
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Can they do that?
- 16 Can they take -- they say, all right, we'll take
- the pledge, but we're going to work with
- 18 prostitutes, make sure that they use
- 19 preventative devices?
- MR. MICHEL: Absolutely they can,
- 21 Justice Ginsburg, and we encourage that. That
- 22 goes back to a point I was going to make
- 23 earlier, which is the -- the pledge that's
- 24 required by the statute only requires one
- 25 affirmative speech act, and that is submitting

- 1 to USAID with the grant agreement a -- a policy
- 2 opposing prostitution and sex trafficking.
- 3 But there's no requirement that
- 4 foreign entities that make that -- that make
- 5 that pledge shout it from the mountaintops or
- 6 get into anybody's face about it. They are
- 7 completely free to, and encouraged to, work with
- 8 prostitutes and victims of sex trafficking to
- 9 prevent HIV/AIDS.
- 10 And -- and, indeed, you know, one of
- 11 the reasons for including this requirement in
- 12 the statute and many other provisions of the
- 13 statute dealing with prostitution and sex
- 14 trafficking is that Congress recognized that
- women who -- who are often coerced into those
- 16 practices are themselves at heightened risks of
- 17 contracting the disease, of spreading the
- 18 disease, and -- and, of course, of -- of losing
- 19 other opportunities in their lives.
- So we certainly encourage groups to do
- 21 that kind of work, and it's not at all in
- 22 tension with the -- with the policy requirement.
- I would also note the -- the amicus
- 24 brief filed in this Court's case last time by
- 25 the Coalition Against Trafficking at Women,

- 1 which made the point that many prostitutes and
- victims of sex trafficking are themselves
- 3 opposed to prostitution and sex trafficking and
- 4 so wouldn't take offense at the statement that
- 5 the groups have to make.
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 7 counsel.
- 8 MR. MICHEL: But in any event --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 10 counsel.
- Justice Breyer?
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: Just following up on
- 13 that question, some would. Some would take
- 14 offense. And it's -- in the last case, you said
- 15 that this -- we said, this Court said, this
- organization, which takes money from the
- 17 government and uses it to fight AIDS, goes to
- 18 prostitutes as part of their effort and says use
- 19 safety. And that's one way of helping to fight
- 20 ATDS.
- 21 And if at the same time they have to
- 22 say, we're against prostitution, we don't like
- it, we're against it, it's terrible, well, the
- 24 prostitutes will think they're hypocrites or
- 25 maybe worse and will be suspicious. That was

- 1 their reasoning last time.
- Now how does that change one iota in
- 3 terms of their rights, which we said they had,
- 4 the major organizations in the United States
- 5 have, the right to do, how does that change one
- 6 iota if, instead of sending their own worker
- 7 there, they give the money to a foreign worker
- 8 in India who is associated with them and that
- 9 foreign worker goes and she says exactly the
- 10 same thing to the prostitutes?
- 11 Since the foreign workers are
- identified by name, mission, logo, with the
- domestic workers, how does it interfere one whit
- less if we accept your argument? They will be
- seen, domestic, as well as the foreign ones, as
- 16 hypocrites or, worse, interfering with their
- mission. If we accepted that argument before,
- 18 why don't we accept it now?
- MR. MICHEL: Well, a couple of quick
- 20 responses, Justice Breyer.
- 21 I -- I don't think that the Court did
- 22 base its prior decision on that particular
- 23 concern. I think it based its decision on the
- 24 First Amendment rights of the U.S. entities that
- 25 were receiving the funds.

1	And so the principal difference
2	between the case last time and the case this
3	time is not that the entities are interacting in
4	with prostitutes in any different manner.
5	It's that the entities that are now subject to
6	the funding condition lack constitutional rights
7	under deeply established you know, the deeply
8	established principle that foreign entities
9	abroad don't exercise constitutional rights and,
10	therefore, can be subject to greater speech
11	restrictions than U.S. entities at home.
12	Now I do want to reiterate that I
13	think the concerns you have raised, while
14	legitimate, are are are not borne out in
15	practice because the policy requirement, whether
16	applied in the past to domestic groups or now to
17	foreign groups, does not require them to tell
18	prostitutes that they oppose prostitution or to
19	do anything affirmative beyond agreeing to be
20	opposed to prostitution and sex trafficking in
21	the letter.
22	And we're fortunate to have a 17-year
23	track record to look at here. The foreign
24	entities have, from the very beginning and even
25	recently under stays of the of the district

- 1 court's injunction in this phase of the
- 2 litigation, been subject to the policy
- 3 requirement throughout that period. And as
- 4 Judge Straub noted in his dissent below, they
- 5 have not identified even one example of -- of
- 6 anybody perceiving hypocrisy in their message or
- 7 of -- of setting back their -- their work to
- 8 fight HIV/AIDS, which, of course, has been
- 9 historically effective.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you.
- 11 Thank you, counsel.
- 12 Justice Alito?
- 13 JUSTICE ALITO: Counsel, as I
- 14 understand the government's position, it depends
- on whether the foreign entity that ultimately
- 16 gets the legal -- the Leadership Act funds is a
- separate legal entity or legally distinct from
- 18 the U.S. entity. Is that correct?
- MR. MICHEL: Yeah, it depends -- what
- 20 we look at is whether the recipient of the
- 21 funds, the entity subject to the condition, has
- 22 First Amendment rights or not, and we think that
- turns on whether they're a U.S. entity or a
- 24 foreign entity.
- 25 JUSTICE ALITO: All right. So what do

- 1 you understand to be the meaning of "legally
- 2 separate or "legally distinct"? And how would
- 3 that apply where the U.S. entity is a non-profit
- 4 corporation, a trust, or an unincorporated
- 5 association, if there are any of those, and in
- 6 the situation where the foreign entity is
- 7 organized in one of those ways?
- 8 MR. MICHEL: So the sort of difficult
- 9 questions about how -- how to parse
- 10 incorporation have really not arisen in this
- 11 case because I think Respondents and the foreign
- 12 entities at issue are clearly legally separate
- in the way that matters for the funding program,
- which is to say they've applied separately for
- 15 different grants.
- And so the easiest way to answer the
- 17 question, I think, is that when a U.S. entity
- applies for a grant as its own entity, it's not
- 19 subject to the policy requirement. When a
- 20 foreign entity applies for a separate grant,
- 21 distinct from any affiliation it might have with
- 22 a U.S. entity, then it is subject to the policy
- 23 requirement. And the foreign --
- JUSTICE ALITO: So the U.S. entity
- 25 gets the money and the U.S. entity wants to make

- 1 a sub-grant to a foreign entity, and as I
- 2 understood your -- your position, whether or not
- 3 the foreign entity can be required to endorse
- 4 the policy depends on whether it's legally
- 5 distinct from the U.S. entity. Is that correct?
- 6 MR. MICHEL: That -- that is correct.
- 7 So, in that sub-grant relationship, the
- 8 condition would then attach to the foreign
- 9 entity as the sub-grantee of the U.S. entity.
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: All right. Well, so,
- if the U.S. entity is a trust, what -- what --
- 12 what -- how would we determine what is legally
- 13 separate from -- what foreign entity is legally
- 14 separate from a trust, a U.S. trust?
- MR. MICHEL: I have to confess,
- 16 Justice Alito, we haven't confronted the trust
- 17 question, so -- so I don't have a ready answer
- 18 for that. I -- I think that in the 17-year
- 19 history of the program, though, that there
- 20 really hasn't been any difficulty in telling
- 21 apart foreign -- foreign organizations from --
- 22 from domestic organizations.
- You know, we're happy to take a
- 24 further look at the -- at the trust
- 25 hypothetical, but it's one that just hasn't

- 1 arisen.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, is that because,
- 3 until recently, the government's test was not
- 4 legal separation -- was not whether it was a
- 5 legally separate entity but a multifactor test
- 6 under the regulation to which Justice Thomas
- 7 referred?
- 8 MR. MICHEL: No, with respect, Justice
- 9 Alito, that -- that's not and -- and hasn't been
- 10 our position. From -- from the outset, the
- 11 government has applied the policy requirement to
- 12 foreign entities abroad, and it turns out, as a
- 13 result of -- of injunctions, for almost that
- 14 entire period, the government has not applied
- 15 the policy requirement to -- to domestic
- 16 entities. The regulations --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 18 counsel.
- 19 Justice Sotomayor? Justice Sotomayor?
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry, Chief.
- 21 Did it again.
- Mr. Michel, the long and the short of
- 23 this is that a domestic agency that does not
- 24 want to adopt a policy of being opposed to
- abortion but who is willing to not support it in

- 1 a program, they can't receive funds unless they
- 2 affiliate with someone who will make the
- 3 statement for them, correct?
- 4 MR. MICHEL: I -- I don't think so,
- 5 Justice Sotomayor. A U.S. entity that opposes
- 6 prostitution and sex trafficking, which is the
- 7 only requirement at issue in this case, can
- 8 still receive funds as a result of this Court's
- 9 prior decision, and they can use those funds
- 10 abroad without contracting or -- or otherwise
- 11 working through affiliates.
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But the domestic
- 13 corporation who doesn't want to speak the
- 14 government's message but does want to do the
- program can't, unless it finds a affiliate who
- will speak the government's message?
- 17 MR. MICHEL: Well, with respect,
- 18 Justice Sotomayor, that -- I think that was the
- 19 issue in the case last time. But --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Exactly.
- MR. MICHEL: -- that's no longer true.
- 22 Yeah.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Exactly. And the
- last time when you sought for cert before us,
- 25 you said it was a facial -- it was tantamount or

- 1 amounting to a facial challenge. If we read our
- 2 prior decision as basically facially addressing
- 3 the restriction, do you win?
- 4 MR. MICHEL: I think if you read it as
- 5 truly facially invalidating the statute, then,
- 6 no, we couldn't win. But for the reason --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: All right. Then I
- 8 move on to another question.
- 9 MR. MICHEL: Of course.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: In Hobby Lobby, we
- 11 recognized that a closely held corporation at
- 12 least could be viewed as expressing the
- religious beliefs of its owner, a person
- independent legally. In Hurley, we said that
- parade organizers could be identified by the
- 16 people who marched in their parade. And,
- similarly, in Regan, we said that an entity
- 18 could speak through an affiliate who would be
- 19 recognized as itself because it could then do
- lobbying that Regan couldn't do under the
- 21 government program.
- 22 So these cases seem to suggest to me
- that at least in the First Amendment context,
- let's put aside any other context, but in the
- 25 First Amendment context, we are less concerned

- 1 with corporate formalities than we are with
- 2 imputation or perception. And to the extent
- 3 that these corporations are closely affiliated,
- 4 and presuming -- I know you said before that you
- 5 don't think there's enough in the record; we can
- 6 deal with that separately -- but presuming that
- 7 the public does perceive these entities as one,
- 8 then why wouldn't the First Amendment apply to
- 9 the inability of the domestic corporations to
- 10 receive funds and partner with a closely
- 11 affiliated foreign entity in implementing the
- 12 program?
- MR. MICHEL: Justice Sotomayor, a
- 14 couple of points. I think Hurley and some of
- 15 the other cases you cited all depend on the
- 16 predicate of a forced affiliation between --
- between the two groups. In Hurley, it was the
- 18 parade organizers and -- and the group that
- 19 wanted to join the parade.
- 20 Here, however -- and this is a
- 21 response, I think, to the last part of your
- 22 question -- no one is forcing the domestic
- 23 entity to affiliate with a foreign entity. The
- domestic entity has a choice to take the money
- and use it itself, and any hypocrisy or

- 1 disturbance to its message that results is a
- 2 result of its own choice to affiliate with a
- 3 group that -- a foreign entity that accepts
- 4 Leadership Act funds and must make the
- 5 statement.
- 6 So they're simply not being forced to
- 7 affiliate with anyone in the way that was at
- 8 issue in those cases you cited.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 10 counsel.
- 11 Justice Gorsuch?
- 12 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel, I'd like to
- just follow up on that for a moment. You -- you
- seem to rely pretty heavily on legal separation.
- But the First Amendment, it's not clear to me
- 16 why that -- that -- that cares, as opposed to
- imputation and in Hurley, as Justice Sotomayor
- 18 pointed out.
- 19 Can you speak to that a little bit
- 20 further for me, please?
- 21 MR. MICHEL: Sure. I think that the
- 22 critical point, as -- as I said to file -- the
- 23 reason to file a corporate separation here is
- that that's how the grant program is organized.
- 25 And -- and this Court, you're right in

- 1 Hurley where there was a forced -- a forced
- 2 association, the Court held that attribution
- 3 matters. But, in every one of the Court's
- 4 funding condition cases, the Court has looked to
- 5 the effect on the recipient of the funds itself.
- And, here, Respondents and the foreign
- 7 entities are making a conscious choice to apply
- 8 for separate grants as separate entities and to
- 9 be subject to separate conditions.
- 10 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I think the argument
- is a little -- goes a little bit beyond the
- 12 forced nature of -- of the association to the
- 13 concern about chilling of speech.
- 14 Can you speak to that? The First
- Amendment doesn't care just about protecting
- 16 speech. It also is concerned about avoiding
- 17 chilling of speech.
- 18 MR. MICHEL: I think that -- I think
- 19 you're -- you're, of course, right about that,
- 20 but I simply don't see any chilling of speech
- 21 here, given that, as a result of this Court's
- 22 prior decision, the domestic entities are free
- 23 to take the money and -- and use it themselves
- in charge of their own message.
- 25 And they're also free to make a

- 1 different choice, which is to work through a
- 2 foreign affiliate that, as a result of
- Respondents' own choice, will have to make the
- 4 policy statement opposing prostitution and sex
- 5 trafficking.
- But, even in that instance,
- 7 Respondents are still free to use their own
- 8 speech rights to explain that -- that they don't
- 9 share the views of the foreign affiliate on
- 10 prostitution and sex trafficking.
- I -- I think, ultimately, what
- 12 Respondents are asking for is a sort of right to
- optimal message management, which is simply not
- 14 what the First Amendment protects.
- 15 If you look at cases like Rumsfeld
- 16 versus FAIR, the Court explained that the law
- 17 schools in that case might well be concerned
- 18 about misattribution of their position on -- on
- 19 letting military recruiters onto campus, and yet
- 20 that concern alone was not a reason to find an
- 21 unconstitutional conditions violation.
- 22 And -- and likewise, in the Court's
- other funding cases, like Rust, for example, and
- 24 Regan, the entities were ultimately not allowed
- 25 to operate in their preferred manner. The --

- 1 the abortion providers, for instance, in Rust,
- 2 you know, certainly didn't want to have to
- 3 separate their speech in the way that they did,
- 4 but the Court found that it was constitutionally
- 5 permissible for Congress and -- and the
- 6 Executive Branch to require them to separate
- 7 that speech because they still had an open
- 8 channel to express their First Amendment views.
- 9 And after this Court's prior decision,
- 10 Respondents clearly have an open channel to --
- 11 to express their views without chilling and
- 12 without having to give up the money.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Thank you.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 15 counsel.
- 16 Justice Kavanaugh?
- 17 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you, Chief
- 18 Justice.
- 19 Good morning, Mr. Michel. I'm
- 20 interested in the implications of our decision
- in this case. In particular, if the government
- 22 were to lose this case, would any other programs
- 23 or statutes be invalidated or called into
- 24 question by such a decision?
- MR. MICHEL: Well, Justice Kavanaugh,

- 1 I think that there would be real concerns about
- 2 that. Of course, I'm not here to give up any
- 3 other statutes, but I do think the gravamen of
- 4 Respondents' position is that they and their
- 5 foreign entities that they've chosen to keep
- 6 separate should somehow be treated as some kind
- 7 of single global unified entity.
- 8 And if that is the theory that they're
- 9 operating under, I do think it would call into
- 10 question a number of different statutory and
- 11 administrative regulations of foreign speech
- 12 that like -- that likely couldn't be applied
- 13 domestically.
- 14 For example, Congress has long banned
- campaign contributions in U.S. elections by
- 16 foreign entities. But Congress, of course,
- 17 could not ban such contributions by U.S.
- 18 entities.
- 19 Yet, if a U.S. entity were able to say
- 20 that it shares or confers on a foreign affiliate
- 21 its First Amendment rights, it might well claim
- 22 a basis for challenging the -- that ban on -- on
- 23 foreign speech. And -- and there are many other
- 24 examples that we cite in our brief as well.
- It's, in fact, commonplace for

- 1 Congress and the Executive Branch to condition
- 2 foreign aid to entities abroad on certain policy
- 3 objectives, such as opposing terrorism or
- 4 supporting women's rights or opposing apartheid
- or, in the case of the Mexico City policy,
- 6 taking certain positions on abortion.
- 7 And those content-based/
- 8 viewpoint-based speech restrictions might not be
- 9 permissible in the United States. And domestic
- 10 entities who were able to confer or -- or, you
- 11 know, unite with their foreign bodies, with
- 12 foreign entities to challenge those, would, I
- think, create considerable risk of disturbing
- 14 long-settled -- long-settled laws.
- 15 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: One other
- 16 question. Has the program with respect to U.S.
- 17 domestic organizations suffered any problems or
- 18 been any less successful since this Court's
- decision in 2013 as far as you're aware?
- 20 MR. MICHEL: Not at all. The program,
- 21 with respect to both domestic and foreign
- 22 recipients of funds, has, as I said at the
- 23 outset, truly been one of the historic successes
- in -- you know, in the history of U.S. foreign
- 25 aid.

- 1 And I think, you know, we do have sort
- of the controlled experiment over the last 15
- 3 years as a result of injunctions in the first
- 4 case and stays of the injunction in this case
- 5 that the current status quo, whereby U.S.
- 6 entities are not subject to the policy
- 7 requirement, but foreign entities are subject to
- 8 the policy requirement, has been the background
- 9 law in place for about 15 years.
- 10 And that has neither set back the
- 11 extraordinary success of the program, nor
- 12 created, as Judge Straub noted in his -- in his
- 13 powerful dissent, any actual evidence of
- 14 hypocrisy or confusion of message for
- 15 Respondents themselves.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Michel,
- take a minute to wrap up, please.
- 18 MR. MICHEL: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 19 Justice.
- 20 I -- I do think this case ultimately
- 21 in -- in its current iteration can be resolved
- 22 on -- on a straightforward basis that
- 23 Respondents themselves long accepted, and that's
- 24 that the policy condition is a permissible
- 25 exercise of Congress's core spending power as

- 1 applied to foreign recipients that lack First
- 2 Amendment rights but not as to domestic
- 3 recipients that have First Amendment rights.
- 4 And although Respondents have -- have
- 5 broadened their position, they had it right the
- 6 first time, and nothing supports the
- 7 bootstrapping that they have requested.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 9 counsel.
- 10 Mr. Bowker.
- 11 ORAL ARGUMENT OF DAVID W. BOWKER
- ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS
- MR. BOWKER: Mr. Chief Justice, and
- may it please the Court:
- The undisputed record shows that the
- 16 U.S. Respondents themselves suffer First
- 17 Amendment harms when the policy requirement is
- imposed on their foreign affiliate.
- 19 Respondents and their affiliates share
- 20 a name, brand, logo, mission, and voice. They
- 21 speak as one, make speech and policy decisions
- 22 together, and are indistinguishable to the
- 23 public.
- 24 As a result, the First Amendment
- 25 rights of U.S. Respondents are violated here in

two ways: first by a speech compulsion that is 1 attributed to them. When CARE in Kenya takes 2 the pledge, its affirmation of belief is 3 attributed to CARE in the United States, thus 4 5 putting words in the mouth of the U.S. entity. 6 The second violation is from a speech 7 restriction. Under regulations that prohibit any CARE entity from contradicting the pledge, 8 even on its own time and dime, thus making it 9 10 impossible for CARE U.S. to disavow CARE Kenya's 11 pledge without engaging in doublespeak and losing U.S. funding for its global network. 12 13 The government says the burden is on 14 Respondents to avoid such harm by applying for 15 funding themselves, severing their connections to affiliates, or disavowing the pledge. But 16 17 this has it backward. 18 When a statute violates the First Amendment, the burden is on the government, not 19 2.0 the speaker, to give First Amendment freedoms 2.1 the necessary breathing space. Plus, the government's proposals all fail in practice. 22 23 Asking Respondents to apply for funds

ignores that they must work through local

affiliates in places where local laws or the

24

- 1 U.S. government's own funding criteria require
- 2 it.
- 3 Severing ties with affiliates would
- 4 destroy their organization. Posing such a
- 5 choice demonstrates how the government continues
- 6 to use its vast spending power to coerce
- 7 Respondents' fealty.
- 8 Disclaimers also fail because, as this
- 9 Court recognized in 2013, U.S. Respondents
- 10 cannot credibly disavow the speech of their own
- 11 clearly identified affiliates.
- 12 The injunction affords Respondents
- 13 complete relief from these violations and should
- 14 be upheld.
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Counsel, can
- 16 your client compel what the foreign affiliates
- 17 say on this question?
- MR. BOWKER: We represent several
- 19 different organizations here, as Your Honor
- 20 knows, and I think it is correct as a factual
- 21 matter that in every case, the U.S. organization
- 22 effectively can veto the speech of a foreign
- organization on these issues. They do speak
- 24 together. They make their speech choices
- 25 together. But the U.S. entities here, as a

- 1 practical matter, typically control that speech.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Can you give
- 3 me a citation to the record where I can look to
- 4 find that? Because I -- I thought that by
- 5 saying that there wasn't a formal affiliation,
- 6 but the organizations share the logo and the
- 7 name and so forth, that there was some absence
- 8 of control. And, in fact, that's what the
- 9 foreign governments, for example, were insisting
- 10 on.
- 11 MR. BOWKER: I think -- I think Your
- 12 Honor is correct that there is -- as a legal
- matter, there may be the absence of control in
- 14 some cases, but, in every case, there is
- 15 practical control. I think the best citations
- 16 to the record would be -- for -- for CARE, would
- 17 be at J.A. 389, which talks about how the CARE
- 18 entity speaks with a single global voice, and
- 19 then I think, importantly, J.A. 436 through 445,
- 20 which discusses CARE U.S.'s ownership of the
- 21 brand and licenses on the brand, which is, in
- that case, legal control to dictate what occurs
- 23 under that brand.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank -- thank
- 25 you for that, counsel.

- 1 You -- you used the phrase "practical
- 2 control," and I just wonder precisely what your
- 3 test for that would be.
- 4 MR. BOWKER: I think the -- the right
- 5 test here is the risk of attribution. As this
- 6 -- as this Court recognized in 2013, there can
- 7 be a risk of attribution across corporate lines
- 8 where the entities in question are so clearly
- 9 identified, as they are here.
- 10 I think the -- the practical control
- 11 point is even stronger when those entities speak
- 12 together with one voice and make their speech
- 13 and policy decisions together.
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 15 counsel.
- 16 Justice Thomas?
- 17 JUSTICE THOMAS: Yes, thank you, Chief
- 18 Justice.
- 19 The -- did you have an opportunity in
- 20 the lower courts to discuss or debate what
- 21 criteria would be used to determine whether or
- 22 not the two organizations merge or are close --
- affiliated closely enough so that the First
- 24 Amendment rights apply domestically?
- MR. BOWKER: We did, Your Honor.

- 1 Judge Marrero gave the parties an opportunity to
- 2 both submit voluminous materials into the record
- and to explain to him the relationship between
- 4 these entities.
- 5 I think, here, what's important is
- 6 there is no dispute about the relationship here.
- 7 These entities are clearly identified with one
- 8 another. There's no dispute that they share a
- 9 name, brand, logo, mission, and voice.
- 10 And I think critically here there was
- 11 a two-year period where we worked hard to try to
- 12 settle this case with the government. We
- 13 provided extensive factual information to the
- 14 government during that period. We also provided
- lists of the entities involved, and we offered
- to stipulate to a definition, and the government
- 17 rejected that -- that effort by us.
- 18 But we -- we did make a full effort in
- 19 the district court and then separately with the
- 20 government to come to terms on this issue.
- 21 JUSTICE THOMAS: Well, if you went
- 22 that far, could you give us just -- give us a
- 23 recap of what the criteria would be for that
- 24 affiliation that would be close enough?
- MR. BOWKER: Yeah, absolutely. I

- 1 think, here, the test should be organizations
- 2 that are part of a global network that share
- names, brands, logos, missions, and voices. And
- 4 I -- I think the reason that that's the right
- 5 test is because we're talking about attribution
- 6 by the reasonable observer.
- 7 As this Court has recognized in a long
- 8 line of cases that Justice Sotomayor mentioned
- 9 and that Justice -- Justices Alito and -- and
- 10 Breyer previously discussed, a long line of
- 11 cases recognized that there can be attribution
- 12 across corporate lines, especially with tightly
- 13 knit international organizations like these.
- 14 JUSTICE THOMAS: The -- I understand
- 15 that. So the one final question, and I know
- 16 you've covered this, but it would be helpful if
- 17 you would give us a recap of what precisely you
- 18 think your injury is.
- MR. BOWKER: Well, I think the -- the
- 20 types of injuries are twofold. The first injury
- is the compulsion of speech. And the problem
- here is that even though the pledge is being
- 23 imposed on our foreign affiliate, those words
- are effectively put into the mouths of the U.S.
- 25 Respondents because of the attribution problem.

- 1 And the government says: Well, it's no harm to
- the U.S. organizations because, of course, they
- 3 can remain neutral.
- 4 But that's not right. Once those
- 5 words are put into the mouths of the U.S.
- 6 Respondents, they -- they -- that policy
- 7 position is attributed to them and the harm is
- 8 done from that compelled speech.
- 9 The second nature -- the second
- 10 category of harm comes from the speech
- 11 restrictions imposed by the regulations. What
- 12 those say is the foreign affiliate will lose its
- funding unless it maintains adequate separation
- 14 from organizations that say or do anything
- inconsistent with the policy.
- So, when the government says that the
- 17 U.S. organization can disavow the pledge, that
- 18 comes at a high price, which is the loss of
- 19 funding for the foreign affiliate.
- 20 And so the -- the categories of
- 21 injuries are twofold, one from the speech
- 22 compulsion and the other from the speech
- 23 restriction. It's a catch 22 for these U.S.
- 24 organizations.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,

- 1 counsel. 2 Justice Ginsburg? JUSTICE GINSBURG: Counsel, I don't 3 follow your last response, because the domestic 4 5 organization is able to speak for itself, and as 6 far as any attribution of the foreign entity to 7 the domestic organization, AOSI can disclaim the foreign entity's pledge. It says: We don't 8 9 take the pledge, and we disclaim any connection 10 to the pledge that's made by foreign entities. 11 It's not our pledge. 12 So they can say, and they say, that 13 pledge, by taking it by the foreign entity, was 14 the price for receiving U.S. dollars. 15 foreign --16 MR. BOWKER: Justice --17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- organizations 18 continue to work with prostitutes; they have
- 21 MR. BOWKER: Justice Ginsburg, I think

just made a statement that, on the ground, means

- this Court had it exactly right in 2013 when it
- 23 recognized that an organization cannot both avow
- the government's viewpoint and then turn around
- 25 and assert a contrary belief or even claim

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2.0

nothing.

- 1 neutrality without appearing hypocritical and
- without appearing to engage in doublespeak.
- And the problem here, of course, is
- 4 that the entities are indistinguishable and they
- 5 speak as one. And so focusing on the corporate
- 6 difference is a mistake. After all, it's -- it
- 7 would be odd that the international operating
- 8 arms of these U.S. organizations are treated
- 9 differently based on whether they operate
- 10 through branch offices or through separate
- 11 corporations.
- 12 And, in fact, what -- what is wrong
- with the government's view that this is all by
- 14 choice is that there are certain jurisdictions
- where local law and even the U.S. government's
- 16 own funding criteria require these U.S.
- 17 Respondents to work through local affiliates.
- 18 And so we're -- we're caught
- unable to disavow, credibly disavow, the speech
- 20 of an entity that looks just like our client and
- 21 speaks as one with our client.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Let me ask you a
- 23 question, an -- an argument that you didn't
- 24 make. You concede that the foreign entity has
- 25 no First Amendment rights.

But what about the First Amendment 1 2 obligations of the U.S. -- U.S. government? For 3 example, we can say the Eighth Amendment doesn't 4 apply abroad, but does that mean that the U.S. 5 government official operating abroad is free to 6 torture people? In other words --7 MR. BOWKER: Justice Ginsburg --JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- is there a --8 MR. BOWKER: -- I think it's an 9 10 important -- sorry. I'm sorry for interrupting. 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And I'm asking whether U.S. actors have an obligation to 12 13 conform their conduct to constitutional norms? 14 MR. BOWKER: The first response is I 15 don't want the Court to think that we're trying to export the First Amendment. That's not what 16 17 we're trying to do. We're just trying to afford 18 complete relief to U.S. organizations that have 19 First Amendment rights here. 2.0 But, to Your Honor's good question, I 2.1 think, in a system with a limited government and a constitution that includes a Bill of Rights, I 22 23 think there is a fair question about the extent 24 to which the U.S. government can go beyond what 25 it's authorized to do in the Constitution with

- 1 respect to speech.
- I guess the other point I would add is
- 3 that even these clearly identified affiliates
- 4 overseas, I think the government would concede,
- 5 have First Amendment rights when they act here
- 6 in the United States, as they often do when they
- 7 come here for meetings or to publish papers or
- 8 to participate in conferences.
- 9 And the problem with the pledge
- 10 requirement, of course, is that it binds these
- organizations forever and for all purposes, both
- 12 the --
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 counsel.
- MR. BOWKER: Yes.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice
- 17 Breyer?
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: It seems to me the
- 19 government is prepared to concede that you, the
- 20 CARE U.S.A., doesn't have to -- doesn't have to
- 21 oppose prostitution. But they say the First
- 22 Amendment doesn't prevent them from telling CARE
- 23 India that it has to oppose.
- So why don't you simply write a grant
- to get all the money yourself and then you give

it to CARE India? Why doesn't that work? 1 2 MR. BOWKER: Well, the -- the problem 3 with that, Your Honor, is that, according to the 4 government, the policy requirement still binds 5 the U.S. organization in the following way: If 6 CARE U.S. gets the money and sub-grants to CARE 7 India, it must carry the burden of the government in the sense of imposing the policy 8 9 requirement on its own affiliates and police 10 compliance with the policy requirement, not just 11 with respect to the speech and activities of its foreign affiliate but also with respect to 12 13 itself, lest it violate the regulations which it 14 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Where do I find in the briefs or in the record just what you said? 16 17 Because it seems to me just what you said shows that this case is 100 percent about the rights 18 19 of an American company, the parent, and the 2.0 question is, can they forbid -- can the 21 government require them to forbid one channel of communicating the message, can it control what 22 23 they say in that channel? 24 The channel happens to be a channel 25 that goes abroad. I -- I don't know that

- 1 there's any precedence for the policy -- the
- 2 precedent that says they can. I mean, have I
- 4 MR. BOWKER: Yes. I think the best
- 5 citations in the record, Justice Breyer, would
- 6 be the regulations themselves, J.A. 248 to 265.
- 7 And I would direct Your Honor's attention to the
- 8 discussion, the commentary of 45 C.F.R. 89.3,
- 9 and that's at J.A. 256 through J.A. 258, where
- 10 the government makes very clear that not only do
- 11 funding recipients have to demonstrate their
- 12 separation from entities that speak
- inconsistently, but they even go so far as to
- 14 say there has to be separation from entities
- that do not have a policy themselves, suggesting
- that the government's view is that the U.S.
- 17 Respondent itself should have a policy.
- 18 I also think another place to look in
- 19 the record is at J.A. 375 and 390, where the
- 20 Pathfinder organization talks about U.S. funding
- 21 criteria that require them to work through local
- 22 affiliates and locally incorporated entities.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Thank you. Thank
- 24 you.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Justice Alito?

1	JUSTICE ALITO: I agreed with your				
2	client's position when this case was before us				
3	previously. But what concerns me today is not				
4	so much the immediate impact of a decision in				
5	your favor but where it would lead.				
6	So let me ask, because I am concerned				
7	that it will force Congress either to withhold				
8	foreign aid entirely or to allow foreign aid to				
9	be used in ways that are contrary to the				
10	interests of the people of this country. So let				
11	me give you this example.				
12	Excuse me. Suppose that the the				
13	United States provides grants to domestic				
14	entities and allows them excuse me to make				
15	sub-grants to foreign schools for the purpose of				
16	promoting education in countries with weak				
17	educational systems. And suppose that Congress				
18	specifies that any foreign entity that gets a				
19	sub-grant must have a policy denouncing				
20	terrorist attacks against American civilians.				
21	Would that be unconstitutional?				
22	MR. BOWKER: No, it wouldn't be, Your				
23	Honor, because that requirement doesn't require				
24	the affirmation of a belief and then conformity				
25	with that belief and espousing it as one's own.				

- 1 And that -- this requirement --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, it does exactly.
- 3 The school that gets the money must have a
- 4 policy denouncing terrorist attacks against
- 5 American civilians. It's compelled to speak.
- 6 It doesn't want to make that speech. It is
- 7 affiliated with an American entity.
- Why isn't the argument exactly the
- 9 same in that situation?
- 10 MR. BOWKER: I -- I think that there's
- 11 a problem with germaneness in that case. The --
- the requirement there wouldn't be related to the
- 13 federal program.
- But your -- to Your Honor's, I think,
- larger question, this doesn't turn on the
- 16 particular ideology.
- 17 I think any -- any idealogical
- 18 commitment, any requirement of an idealogical
- 19 commitment by grantees is problematic for the
- 20 same reasons as the one here. What I will --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Yeah, exactly. That's
- 22 exactly right. Let me -- let me ask you one
- 23 more question before my time expires.
- Why doesn't the logic of your argument
- apply to the provision of funds to totally

- 1 independent foreign entities?
- 2 So suppose a U.S. entity gets money.
- 3 Under the Leadership Act, it wants to make a
- 4 sub-grant to a non-affiliated foreign entity,
- 5 but it can't do it unless the foreign entity
- 6 makes -- unless the U.S. entity tells the
- 7 foreign entity, you cannot use -- you must have
- 8 a policy opposing prostitution.
- 9 The U.S. entity is compelled to make a
- 10 statement that it doesn't want to make. Why
- doesn't the logic of your argument apply there?
- MR. BOWKER: Well, in that case, the
- 13 entity being made to take the pledge is not
- 14 clearly identified with the U.S. entity and,
- therefore, the pledge of the foreign entity
- doesn't get attributed back to the U.S. entity.
- 17 And I think that's a very important difference.
- 18 Here, when the U.S. entity imposes the
- 19 requirement on its sub-grantee, on its clearly
- 20 identified foreign affiliate, it's as if it's
- 21 imposing the pledge requirement on itself,
- 22 because, after all, these -- these organizations
- are indistinguishable and speak with one voice.
- I -- I do think it's important to make
- 25 the point that the government still has very

- 1 broad authority to control what happens with its
- 2 funds, to put in place policies for its
- 3 programs, and to require that grantees fulfill
- 4 the requirements of the program in every
- 5 respect.
- 6 This particular requirement is unique.
- 7 There's no other requirement like it in U.S.
- 8 law. And I think a decision for Respondents can
- 9 be very narrow, turning on the facts of this
- 10 case and the prior ruling of this Court, which
- 11 declared the policy requirement
- 12 unconstitutional.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 14 counsel.
- Justice Sotomayor?
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, there has
- been a long history to this case. I'm not quite
- 18 sure what the relationship is of your clients to
- 19 the agency now.
- 20 Are your clients grant recipients who
- 21 currently receive grants, who currently work
- through their foreign affiliates, and their
- foreign affiliates have not taken this pledge,
- or have they not received grants and want to
- work with their foreign affiliates?

I'm -- I'm not quite sure what the 1 2 status is of what the government's been doing or 3 not doing. 4 MR. BOWKER: So these organizations 5 are the same organizations that were before the 6 Court in 2013 but a smaller group because the 7 rest of the clients are too small to have global 8 networks. 9 We now are talking about the entities 10 that were before the Court in 2013 that are the -- the large international entities like CARE 11 and Save the Children and World Vision and 12 13 Pathfinder that are the ones with their own 14 clearly identified affiliates overseas. 15 And these organizations receive money 16 here in the United States and receive money 17 through their locally incorporated affiliates. 18 CARE, which is the example we've been using, the U.S. entity receives all U.S. grant money under 19 2.0 this program and then sub-grants to its local 2.1 affiliates. 2.2 And so, in the case of CARE, it has 23 done that under objection. It -- it asserts 24 that it should be free of this policy

requirement. It believed that the litigation in

- 1 2013 would have disposed of this issue. And it
- 2 continues to suffer these First Amendment harms
- and violations that we've been discussing today.
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I don't -- I'm not
- 5 sure you've answered my question. They are
- 6 receiving the funds. Are they subcontracting
- 7 with affiliates or partnering with affiliates
- 8 and are the affiliates making the pledge and
- 9 they're complaining about the fact that they're
- 10 forced to do that? Or have they not been -- and
- 11 have they not been policing the foreign
- affiliates and the government's now threatening
- 13 to take away the funding?
- MR. BOWKER: Well, it's a little bit
- of both, Your Honor. Let me explain.
- 16 They are receiving the funds, and they
- 17 are imposing the pledge requirement under
- 18 objection on their clearly identified foreign
- 19 affiliates overseas.
- The government has said that all these
- 21 years there's been no objection to this
- 22 practice. I -- I don't think that's exactly
- 23 right, with respect to my friend. In fact,
- 24 early in the litigation, there was a -- there
- 25 was a disagreement in the district court about

- 1 the proper scope of the injunctive relief, and
- 2 the Respondents wanted broader relief to include
- 3 sub-grantees. And the government objected on
- 4 the ground that those facts were not yet known.
- 5 And the facts now are known. That was
- 6 -- that was fully 12 years ago. The facts are
- 7 known. The record is developed. The district
- 8 court entered its findings. And I think there's
- 9 no dispute about the nature of the relationship
- 10 now.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And so are they
- threatening to take away the funding? Why?
- MR. BOWKER: They are now saying that
- 14 the policy requirement will be enforced as
- 15 against the clearly identified foreign
- 16 affiliates of the U.S. Respondents because, they
- 17 say, those organizations have no First Amendment
- 18 rights.
- We argue that this isn't about any
- 20 rights of the foreign organizations. It's about
- 21 the First Amendment right.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, no, no.
- 23 Counsel --
- MR. BOWKER: Yes.
- 25 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- I'm sorry for

- 1 interrupting, but if the foreign affiliates have
- 2 made the policy statement, what -- so they've
- done what the government wants. Why would the
- 4 government take the funding away from you or
- 5 them?
- 6 MR. BOWKER: We -- we object to that
- 7 policy requirement. We don't want to have to
- 8 impose it on our clearly identified affiliates.
- 9 And it's causing the U.S. Respondents to have to
- 10 engage in doublespeak. And if they do that, if
- 11 they attempt to disavow that pledge, which is
- 12 attributed to them, they will lose their funding
- 13 for the global network. And --
- 14 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 15 counsel.
- 16 Justice Gorsuch?
- 17 JUSTICE GORSUCH: Counsel, in -- in
- 18 response to Justice Ginsburg and Justice Thomas,
- 19 you indicated that the primary harm your client
- 20 had suffered is the risk of attribution.
- 21 mistaken attribution, of the foreign affiliate's
- 22 speech to the domestic entity.
- That sounds a bit like an alter ego
- 24 argument, that the ordinary listener will be
- 25 confused and attribute the speech of a foreign

- 1 affiliate to the domestic entity.
- 2 Yet, at the same time, I -- I assume
- 3 you -- you'd resist any effort to pierce the
- 4 corporate veil from those foreign entities and
- 5 impose liability on the domestic entity. So in
- 6 what respect is it and when should we attribute
- 7 speech or actions of foreign affiliates to the
- 8 domestic entity? Why would we pierce the
- 9 corporate veil sometimes but not all the time?
- MR. BOWKER: Your Honor, we don't ask
- 11 the Court to pierce the veil or to treat these
- 12 entities as alter egos. Rather, we're focused
- on the unique nature of speech and the way
- speech can be attributed even when corporate
- 15 formalities are observed.
- 16 And I think the right line of case law
- here is not just this Court's decision in 2013
- 18 in AOSI but also cases like Pleasant Grove City
- 19 v. Summum; Walker v. Texas Division, Sons --
- 20 Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans; Pacific
- 21 Gas & Electric; and, as Justice Sotomayor
- 22 mentioned, the Hurley parade case. All of those
- 23 cases recognize that legally separate entities
- or individuals and entities can have speech
- 25 attributed from one to the other without

- 1 engaging in any kind of veil-piercing or alter
- ego analysis, which would get the Court mired
- 3 into the corporate formalities, which we don't
- 4 advocate.
- 5 Rather, we think a more limited
- 6 holding based on the nature of speech and the
- 7 First Amendment would suffice.
- 8 JUSTICE GORSUCH: On -- on that score,
- 9 what evidence is there that there is this risk
- of confusion or attribution, given that the
- 11 domestic entity is free to disavow the
- 12 statements of any foreign affiliates? What --
- it seems to me an empirical question. Do we
- 14 have any empirics?
- MR. BOWKER: Yeah, I think the best
- 16 evidence is -- is in the record in the
- 17 unrebutted sworn declarations of these
- organizations, which talk about how they are
- 19 perceived in the public health community, the
- 20 price they are paying in the form of hypocrisy
- 21 and the way that they lose their integrity and
- their reputation and their brand when they're
- 23 forced to speak out of two sides of their mouth.
- 24 The -- the declarations that were --
- 25 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I -- I understand --

- 1 I understand that harm, counsel. And I'm sorry
- 2 to interrupt, but I -- I understand the harm
- 3 that -- that people will see the disavowal and
- 4 will -- will take cognizance of it.
- 5 But is that the same thing as anyone
- 6 really thinking that the domestic entity abides
- 7 by the government restrictions and endorses
- 8 them? Does anyone really think that when they
- 9 -- when they -- when they read that, or do they
- 10 think that this is a statement made by a foreign
- 11 entity in order to secure U.S. dollars that
- 12 obviously the U.S. entity itself does not
- promote or agree with? Why wouldn't that be the
- 14 natural reading by the -- by the average reader?
- 15 MR. BOWKER: Well, I think, when these
- 16 public health organizations take a pledge saying
- 17 that they believe something, I think people take
- it very seriously. When they say that they
- 19 believe that HIV/AIDS is transmitted in a
- 20 certain way or when they say they believe that
- 21 prostitution should be dealt with in a way that
- 22 stops the spread of the disease, people listen
- 23 to them.
- 24 The reason they're so effective in
- 25 these programs --

- 1 JUSTICE GORSUCH: I'm sorry, counsel.
- 2 Counsel, I accept that, again. That's not
- 3 really quite my question.
- 4 Couldn't a reasonable person hold in
- 5 his or her mind two things: one, the foreign
- 6 entity believes X; two, the domestic entity does
- 7 not believe X?
- 8 MR. BOWKER: Well, Your Honor, I think
- 9 that falls apart when the organization speaks
- 10 with one voice, as these organizations do. They
- 11 -- they have a right to speak that way. They
- 12 have a right to -- to join with their affiliates
- in having their -- their -- their common voice
- 14 and their common mission.
- And when they're told to say one thing
- and then disavow it in another breath, I think
- it undercuts their reputation and brand and
- 18 their own speech.
- JUSTICE GORSUCH: Well, are --
- 20 MR. BOWKER: I think Your Honor had it
- 21 exactly right.
- 22 JUSTICE GORSUCH: -- are we back then,
- counsel, to -- to the -- the belief that people
- 24 will always confuse this as one entity and it's
- 25 not possible for a local chapter of an

- 1 organization to have a different view than the
- 2 national organization or the international
- 3 organization? That people cannot hold that --
- 4 that concept in their heads?
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Briefly,
- 6 counsel.
- 7 MR. BOWKER: Yes, briefly. I think
- 8 the public doesn't know that these are separate
- 9 corporations. The problem is they're -- they
- 10 are indistinguishable and they -- they look to
- 11 the public to be exactly the same.
- 12 And so it really would be more like
- 13 Your Honor's case in Masterpiece Cake Shop,
- 14 making the baker say one thing and then attempt
- 15 to disavow it in the next breath.
- 16 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you.
- 17 Justice Kavanaugh?
- JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you, Chief
- 19 Justice.
- 20 Good morning, counsel. I want to
- 21 clarify, first, one thing from your colloquy
- 22 with Justice Ginsburg. You agree, I assume,
- 23 that unaffiliated foreign entities acting abroad
- have no constitutional rights under this Court's
- 25 precedents?

- 1 MR. BOWKER: We do, Your Honor.
- 2 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. And then I
- 3 want to pick up on Justice Alito's concern or
- 4 question about the foreign policy effects of
- 5 your approach, and I have a hypothetical as
- 6 well.
- 7 Suppose the U.S. government wants to
- 8 fund foreign NGOs that support peace in the
- 9 Middle East but only if the NGOs explicitly
- 10 recognize Israel as a legitimate state. Are you
- 11 saying the U.S. can't impose that kind of speech
- 12 restriction on foreign NGOs that are affiliated
- 13 with U.S. organizations?
- 14 MR. BOWKER: I think that's a -- a
- 15 harder case, because I don't -- I don't hear
- that as requiring affirmation of a belief.
- 17 Rather, it's in recognizing a fact that the U.S.
- 18 has established a certain diplomatic
- 19 relationship with -- with Israel, and the U.S.
- 20 government gets to say what that relationship is
- 21 for the United States.
- I don't think that's making the
- 23 entities espouse that view as their own. And so
- I think that's different. I think that would be
- 25 acceptable.

- 1 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: That would be 2 acceptable in your view? 3 MR. BOWKER: I -- I think it would be. 4 JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Okay. And then 5 the government says that your position would 6 unleash foreign affiliates of U.S. corporations to pump money into the U.S. election process. 7 8 And I wanted to give you a chance to respond to 9 that claim, which was in the government's reply 10 brief and then repeated here today. 11 MR. BOWKER: Yeah, I -- I disagree 12 with that. That's a very different case. That 13 is a -- that is a speech restriction. It is not speech compulsion. And that restriction doesn't 14 15 apply to the U.S. organizations. 16 And so -- and I think this Court dealt 17 with that the right way in Citizens United and 18 distinguished the foreign organizations from the U.S. organizations, and it's a different case. 19
- 2.1

counsel.

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2.2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: One minute to

JUSTICE KAVANAUGH: Thank you,

- 23 wrap up, Mr. Bowker.
- 24 MR. BOWKER: Thank you, Your Honor.
- 25 Applying the policy requirement to

- 1 foreign members of these tight-knit
- 2 international entities fighting HIV/AIDS
- 3 overseas puts words in the mouths of the U.S.
- 4 members of those entities, and the program
- 5 regulations effectively prevent the U.S. members
- from even disavowing what the foreign members
- 7 are compelled to say.
- 8 The injunction should be upheld.
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
- 10 counsel.
- 11 Mr. Michel, three minutes for
- 12 rebuttal.
- 13 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF CHRISTOPHER G. MICHEL
- ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS
- MR. MICHEL: Thank you, Mr. Chief
- 16 Justice. Just a few points in rebuttal.
- 17 First, to respond to Justice
- 18 Sotomayor's question about facial invalidity,
- 19 Footnote 1 of our reply brief explains that the
- 20 government's prior submission was clear that the
- 21 statute was -- it was being challenged only with
- 22 respect to domestic entities, and, in fact, a
- 23 true facial invalidation would invalidate the
- 24 statute even as applied to foreign entities that
- 25 have no connection to the United States, which I

- 1 take it my friend has just conceded is not his
- 2 position.
- 3 Second, my friend concedes -- my
- 4 friend stated that the U.S. entity truly is in
- 5 control. And I think that's exactly right. But
- 6 that ultimately underscores that it's the U.S.
- 7 entity, the holder of the First Amendment
- 8 rights, that is making a choice to affiliate
- 9 with a foreign entity that accepts Leadership
- 10 Act funds.
- 11 Unlike in this case last time and
- 12 unlike in cases like Hurley and Masterpiece, the
- 13 U.S. entity is not required to make that choice.
- 14 The U.S. entity has a separate choice to accept
- 15 Leadership Act funds itself and operate itself
- 16 without -- in -- in foreign countries without
- any risk of hypocrisy or -- or a mixed message.
- 18 As Justice Gorsuch says, you have to
- 19 take the sweet with the sour when you decide to
- 20 set up a separate corporate entity.
- Now my friend suggests that either
- 22 U.S. funding conditions or foreign law somehow
- 23 give an incentive for -- for U.S. entities to
- 24 use foreign affiliates, but they're not
- 25 challenging any U.S. funding decisions, which

- 1 would, we believe, beyond -- be beyond challenge
- 2 anyway. And foreign law certainly cannot change
- 3 the scope of a U.S. entity's First Amendment
- 4 rights.
- 5 My -- my friend's position ultimately
- 6 rests on what he frames as a risk of attribution
- 7 test. But I think Judge Straub got it right
- 8 below when he called that position startling.
- 9 As Justice Kavanaugh and Justice Alito
- 10 both, I think, alluded to, that test would be
- 11 unworkable and it would call into question all
- 12 manner of U.S. speech restrictions on foreign
- 13 entities abroad.
- Now my friend says there's a
- 15 distinction between speech restrictions and
- speech compulsions, but the risk of attribution
- test that he has outlined, where you simply
- 18 compare names, logos, and brands, has nothing to
- do with the distinction between speech
- 20 attribution and speech compulsion.
- 21 And in all events, the foreign
- 22 entities here are only, if the -- if the U.S.
- 23 entities choose, required to make the statement
- in a -- in a letter to USAID, not to shout it
- 25 from the mountaintops and not to say anything

1	that will ultimately interfere with the U.S.
2	recipient's message.
3	Finally, I want to note Respondents
4	never made this argument for more than a decade
5	of the litigation. I think what happened is
6	that, having secured rights for U.S. entities,
7	they decided to ask for the world.
8	But there's no basis in this Court's
9	prior decision or any other source of law for
10	that for that holding. It would invalidate a
11	provision that Congress has adopted and
12	reauthorized and that is working.
13	The decision below should be reversed.
14	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
15	counsel. The case is submitted.
16	(Whereupon, at 11:09 a.m., the case
17	was submitted.)
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