

Partner Catherine Carroll Presents Supreme Court Argument in ERISA Case

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WilmerHale Partner [Catherine Carroll](#) presented oral argument in *Heimeshoff v. Hartford Life & Accident Insurance Co.* before the Supreme Court on Tuesday, October 15. In the first Supreme Court argument of her career, Carroll represented Hartford Life & Accident Insurance Co. and Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. in a case that challenged the contractual limitations period for an employee's denial-of-benefits suit under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

The argument received media coverage in [Law360](#) and [Bloomberg](#), among other outlets. The *Law360* article reported that Carroll "warned the court that a ruling in favor of Heimeshoff could have far-reaching implications beyond the question directly presented in the case." The article referred to various excerpts from Carroll's argument and quoted her saying, "[s]ince ERISA's enactment, this court has never held that in a suit to enforce the terms of an ERISA plan those terms can be thrown out the window" and that a decision in the petitioner's favor "would be a very significant shift in how this court enforces ERISA plans, and it would undermine Congress' goal of wanting to assure employers and plan sponsors that the terms on which they agree to provide benefits will be respected." A decision in the case is expected by June 2014.

Carroll is a partner in WilmerHale's [Litigation/Controversy Department](#) and a member of the [Appellate and Supreme Court Litigation](#) and [Government and Regulatory Litigation](#) Practice Groups. Her practice focuses on appellate litigation in the US Supreme Court and the federal courts of appeals.