

From: [Marina B. Brown](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Women's preventive health care has to include contraception!
Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2011 8:53:10 PM

Dear Sir/Madam

I am delighted that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is finally considering adopting the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) recommendations that women's preventive health care be completely covered by any new health insurance plans under the new health care reform law! It is time that women are not relegated to second class services.

But unfortunately I read that efforts are underway to expand "religious refusal" exemptions. If expanded, certain employers would be exempt from having to provide coverage for contraceptive services to their female employees if the employer is opposed to contraception. This is totally absurd on issues for the prevention of pregnancy!

I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in asking you to accept the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine as pertain to coverage of preventive care under the new health care law, and to reject any exemptions for "religious employers." These preventive services are a critical element of the new law and would provide countless women better access to necessary health care.

While AAUW believes that "religious refusal" exemptions unjustly deny women access to contraceptive services, others, driven by an ideological distaste for all contraceptive services, are pushing the government to make exemptions even larger. Indeed, some groups are pushing for the exemption to apply to religiously-run health providers, so hospitals with religious affiliations would be exempt from the coverage requirement, even though they employ people of all faiths and ideologies. If granted, this larger exemption would deny access to thousands of women just because of where they work.

Sincerely,

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There is only one true worship, and that is the practice of justice. Robert Ingersoll