

From: [ARLENE ZIDE](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: "Religious refusal exemptions"
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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.

Remember the separation of Church and State! If hospitals want exemptions to federal law then they should have to give up any federal support as well....

I urge you to ensure women have access to **quality** preventive care by accepting IOM's recommendations and **rejecting the proposed religious refusal exemption provisions.**