

**From:** [kshankman@benedictine.edu](mailto:kshankman@benedictine.edu)  
**To:** [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)  
**Subject:** Comment: RIN 1210-AB44  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 21, 2011 7:02:25 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Sir or Madam

As the Dean of a Catholic College, I am respectfully requesting, on behalf of my institution and others similarly situated, that HHS reconsider the exceptionally narrow religious exemption included in the ? preventive services? mandate. As an institution of higher education, our mission is the education of men and women within a community of faith and scholarship. The religious exemption in the draft regulations would not recognize our freedom to carry out this mission. While the inculcation of religious values is not our primary purpose, (and, therefore, we do not qualify under the exceptionally narrow definition of a religious organization contained within the regulations) nevertheless, adherence to the tenets of our faith is an obligation central to our identity as a Catholic college. To provide or fund contraceptive coverage and sterilization services, would be contrary to our institutional commitment to the teaching of the Catholic church. The religious exemption in the mandate is not broad enough to protect the legitimate conscience rights of institutions that have a well-founded and well-established commitment to religious principles and practices that would prevent them from conscientiously complying with the mandate. Therefore, I suggest that the mandate be removed in its entirety; failing that, I would ask that the religious exemption be broadened to be more consistent with existing practice, exempting organizations like ours from the burden of laws that contradict their very purpose and mission.

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Shankman  
Benedictine College

Sincerely,  
Kimberly Shankman  
Atchison, KS 66002