

# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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**Docket:** EBSA-2010-0018

Interim Final Rules for Group Health Plans and Health Insurance Issuers Relating to Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

**Comment On:** EBSA-2010-0018-0002

Group Health Plans and Health Insurance Issuers Relating to Coverage of Preventive Services under Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Amendment

**Document:** EBSA-2010-0018-DRAFT-0593

Comment on FR Doc # 2011-19684

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## Submitter Information

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## General Comment

Dear Ms. Sebelius:

Please do not adopt the current proposed rule as written that forces all businesses and organizations to provide birth control and abortifacient agents to their employees via employer provided health plans. Not only does this contravene the Constitutional protection of the First Amendment guaranteeing the Free Exercise of Religion, it is unconscionable to force a person or group to act directly contrary to their basic understanding of the protection and care of human life. Adoption of the current rule would be akin to mandating pacifist groups to provide guns to employees for self protection.

This proposal affects many religious and non-religious groups and businesses who oppose it, including Christians, Orthodox Jews, Islamics, and Humanists, as well as individual persons of conscience. However, please understand the particularly destructive effect this mandate would have on the social services provided by Catholic-related charities. After government, these charities are the largest provider of services to the poor and voiceless in our country. Many of these services may have to be curtailed or ended because of this mandate, harming only the poorest in our great nation. Even on practical grounds, this result overcomes any justification of the rule -- more people would love health care from the many Catholic hospitals and health organizations than would appreciate the addition of birth control and abortifacients to their health policy.

Finally, please understand that, as Catholics, funding or even indirectly providing for the extinguishment of human life is anathema to our core. For further information, please read the materials on [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) on this matter. Even better, it would help your understanding most to read *Humanae Vitae* by Pope Paul VI, which clearly sets out from history and established doctrine why this proposed mandate is directly contrary to the principle of respect for human life for millions of practicing Catholics.

Thank you.