

From: [Teddy](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: "religious refusal" exemptions for health care
Date: Wednesday, August 10, 2011 6:23:15 PM

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.

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.

As a mail carrier, I have to deliver mail that I consider offensive; whether it is political or sexual. There is no exemption for people like me; I can't refuse to deliver mail that conflicts with my personal or religious beliefs. If I have a problem with that, I should be looking for another line of work. The same goes for health care professionals. If dispensing legally prescribed medications is offensive to them, then they can do something else for a living. What comes next? Refusing to dispense Antabuse because they feel alcoholism is a moral problem? Antibiotics because they are Christian Scientists? Medications for mental illnesses because they are Scientologists? This is a slippery slope, and one down which we should not be travelling.

Sincerely,

Teddy Gingerich