

# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

<b>As of:</b> August 29, 2011
<b>Received:</b> August 23, 2011
<b>Status:</b> Pending_Post
<b>Tracking No.</b> 80eeab3b
<b>Comments Due:</b> September 30, 2011
<b>Submission Type:</b> Web

**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-0041

Comment on FR Doc # 2011-19684

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## General Comment

"The new guidelines require most health insurance plans in the United States—including those offered by private employers—to provide full access to birth control, as well as abortion-inducing drugs. 'Ella' and the 'morning after pill' have been shown to harm women, and actually kill the developing baby by starving it of nutrients...Under the new HHS guidelines, most health insurance plans in the United States will have to provide the full range of birth control drugs. No co-pay can be required. From a fiscal perspective, it is impossible to see how this will bring down health care costs because birth control drugs are extremely expensive. And more importantly, this regulation will completely eliminate the right of employers to follow their conscience and refuse to offer birth control drugs to their employees in company-funded health care plans. Many employers object to using their company resources to pay for birth control, and many more strongly object to using company resources to pay for abortion-inducing drugs...Unfortunately, the religious exemption is extremely narrow and will only apply to churches and other houses of worship, and possibly denominational seminaries. Religious organizations, most religious colleges, and other religious employers who have conscientious objections to offering birth control or abortion-inducing drugs will be forced to choose between abhorrent options. They will have to decide whether to end their insurance programs—which will hurt millions of employees across the nation—or violate their conscience by including birth control and abortion-inducing drugs in their insurance programs." (HSLDA statement) I believe that this narrow religious exemption should be broadened to not only include houses of worship, but also religious organizations, religious colleges, and employer-funded private health insurance plans if the employer has a conscientious objection to using corporate funds to pay for birth control or abortion-inducing drugs.