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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

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

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General Comment

I am opposed to the illegality of the new guidelines related to the Obama administration's implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Under the guidelines released on August 1, 2011 by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), most health insurance plans in the United States - including those offered by private employers - must provide full access to birth control drugs, as well as abortion-inducing drugs. Numerous medical professional in the pro-life and medical communities believe that such drugs as "Ella," and the "morning after pill" and similar drugs have been shown to harm women, and actually kill the developing baby by starving it of nutrients.

This is a concern because as a result of the HRSA guidelines, employers who have a pro-life, religious, or other conscientious objection to facilitating the use of birth control drugs or abortion-inducing drugs are now required to provide the very drugs that they believe result in the death of a human being. According to the their conscience, this would be murder and sinful.

Now that employers will be required to pay for these drugs, the religious and conscientious rights of employers are being trampled by these Guidelines and the narrow religious exemption. Numerous religious organizations will now have no choice but to either violate their religious and conscientious objections, or drop their health insurance coverage for their employees, leading to great hardship for millions of employees and their families around the nation.

This religious exemption is illegally narrow because the proposed religious exemption violates the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. HHS must draft a new religious exemption - one which protects the religious freedom rights of all employers - in order to avoid legal challenges and ultimately defeat for this illegally narrow proposed religious exemption. Also, the proposed religious exemption does not protect ordinary employers who have sincerely he