

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

As of: September 27, 2011
Received: September 25, 2011
Status: Pending_Post
Tracking No. 80f2b75d
Comments Due: September 30, 2011
Submission Type: 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-0305

Comment on FR Doc # 2011-19684

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General Comment

The decision to mandate the inclusion of sterilization and contraception as preventative services in private insurance plans is a direct assault on religious liberty. As a practicing Roman Catholic, I strongly urge you to stop the implementation of this regulation as it flies in the face of all logic by "prohibiting the free exercise" of religion as established in 1st Amendment to the US Constitution. The exemption is so narrowly written as to exclude all but organizations that strictly serve only members of their denomination.

This proposed regulation will force Catholic schools, health care organizations, and social service providers to either violate their beliefs and the teaching of the Church, stop serving non-Catholics, or drop health care coverage for all employees. These organizations provide much needed service to all regardless of their religious background and this decision will force them to choose one or the other. The decision makers at HHS need to realize that there are often second and third order effects of actions that dilute or negate the intended outcome of the original action. The effects of this poorly conceived regulation will be negative.