

From: thenthattempt@gmail.com on behalf of [Kim Slattery](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Regarding File Code RIN 1210-AB4
Date: Tuesday, September 27, 2011 11:08:55 PM

To whom it may concern:

In early August, the Department for Health and Human Services released guidelines that would force Catholic institutions to subsidize through their health care plans contraception and sterilization procedures. This is a direct threat to the religious liberty of Catholics, freedom of conscience, and the social service ministry of the Catholic Church. The religious exemption listed in the document is no exemption at all, as it would require any Catholic institution that serves non-Catholics or employs non-Catholics to violate Catholic belief or close its doors.

While some members of our Church do not always represent this truth, followers of the Catholic faith serve and employ people of all creeds, races, nationalities, ethnicities, and backgrounds, a ministry we are called to by Christ. To exploit this by requiring organizations affiliated with the Catholic Church, who do not restrict employment or service to people of our own faith, to provide healthcare that we oppose on moral grounds, according to our definition of human life beginning at conception and the necessity of a moral sexual act being open to life, is criminal. The U.S. Constitution restricts the government from "prohibiting the free exercise" of religion. Freely exercising the Catholic faith involves the ability to refuse to aid in contraception or sterilization, which we believe are sinful, and allowing us to freely exercise our religion in this way this does not remove anyone's access to contraceptive methods (a category in which abstinence and natural family planning/fertility awareness are included) or otherwise violate anyone's rights. Even in the case that it did, there is no entitlement to contraception or sterilization listed in the U.S. Constitution.

I ask that you do everything possible to rescind the "Preventive Service Mandate" in its present state or amend it to loosen the current overly restrictive religious exemption as an unprecedented federal interference in the right of Catholics and other religious organizations to serve their community without violating their fundamental moral beliefs.

Currently, the proposed definition of a religious institution is:

(1) Has the inculcation of religious values as its purpose; (2) primarily employs persons who share its religious tenets; (3) primarily serves persons who share its religious tenets; and (4) is a non-profit organization under section 6033(a)(1) and section 6033(a)(3)(A)(i) or (iii) of the Code.

I would suggest amending the definition to read:

(1) Explicitly states its religious affiliation and involves the religious values of the affiliation in its mission or purpose, in a way that is acceptable to the leaders and the majority of the affiliation; (2) employs or is led by persons who share its religious tenets; (3) is at least as willing to serve persons who share its religious tenets as it is to serve persons who do not share its religious tenets; and (4) is a non-profit organization under section 6033(a)(1) and section 6033(a)(3)(A)(i) or (iii) of the Code.

I will also be sending a copy of this letter by mail to the Department of Health and Human Services, but in case it does not arrive on time, I am emailing it to you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Much peace and many blessings,

[Signed]

Kimberly A. Slattery