PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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

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General Comment

This is in support of the new guidelines that will ensure women receive preventive health services at no additional cost! Great advancement! On the other hand, I wish to express my concern regarding the amendment to the interim final regulation (CMS-992-IFC2) which exempts some religious institutions from providing coverage for contraception as preventive care. This proposed exemption is unacceptable because it is based on a serious misreading of the freedom of religion we hold dear. The HHS decision to include full coverage for contraception services and counseling as preventive services is the result of sound judgment about what is good for all society. Allowing certain faith-based organizations to avoid this statute is, in fact, promoting the private interests of one religion—or even one conservative element of that religion—over the consciences of employees. The HHS should listen to the voices of the majority of Americans who believe choices related to contraception should not be dictated by employers. We urge you to revoke the proposed exemption and protect the individual freedoms of all those who would seek access to these important healthcare services, regardless of where they work.