

From: [Barbara B. Barnard](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: Preventive Care and Contraception
Date: Friday, August 12, 2011 10:00:17 PM

Dear Ms. Sebelius,

It appears the US has its own Taliban! The best advance in preventive health care proposal for women and the religious right protests. Birth control measures for women should have been covered by health insurance years ago. This issue should be allowed to go in effect. This is one of the best ways to eliminate unwanted pregnancies and reduce abortions. The religious right cannot have this both ways.. be against birth control and also abortion.

I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in asking you to accept the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine as pertain to coverage of preventive care under the new health care law, and to reject any exemptions for "religious employers." These preventive services are a critical element of the new law and would provide countless women better access to necessary health care.

While AAUW believes that "religious refusal" exemptions unjustly deny women access to contraceptive services, others, driven by an ideological distaste for all contraceptive services, are pushing the government to make exemptions even larger. Indeed, some groups are pushing for the exemption to apply to religiously-run health providers, so hospitals with religious affiliations would be exempt from the coverage requirement, even though they employ people of all faiths and ideologies. If granted, this larger exemption would deny access to thousands of women just because of where they work.

I urge you to ensure women have access to quality preventive care by accepting IOM's recommendations and rejecting the proposed religious refusal exemption provisions.

A concerned female voter who lives in Alabama.