

**From:** [Helen Langa](#)  
**To:** [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)  
**Subject:** reject exemptions for religious employers for women's health coverage  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 10, 2011 10:09:22 PM

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Dear Health and Human Services:

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.

Women are uniquely able to give birth to human beings, but we also need health care to limit the size of our families and to take the best care of the children we already have! Employers should be able to define health care for their own personal families, but not for those who work in their businesses!

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.

Thank you!

Helen Langa