

**From:** [Pamela Mummery](#)  
**To:** [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)  
**Subject:** "Religious Refusal" Exemptions  
**Date:** Thursday, August 11, 2011 8:06:03 AM

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To whom it may concern:

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

While I and the AAUW believe 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. This is unacceptable in America, where women should have the right to control their own bodies.

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