

**From:** [Christina Jones](#)  
**To:** [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)  
**Subject:** Conscience protections should be enacted for all Americans  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 09, 2011 4:01:42 PM

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The proposed regulation of the new health care reform bill (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) defines Religious Employers too narrowly, and will result in a huge loss of services currently provided by Catholic hospitals and other charities. Please ensure adequate conscience protection by allowing all Catholic hospitals, educational institutions and other charities to choose whether or not to fund contraceptives and sterilization.

Catholic hospitals, charities and educational institutions provide about \$30 billion worth of service annually in this country. No one presents a baptismal certificate at the emergency room. The hungry do not recite the Creed to get groceries at the food pantry. Students can pursue learning at The Catholic University of America, Villanova or any other Catholic college without passing a catechism admissions test. The commitment to serve those in need, the sick, the hungry, the uneducated, is intrinsic to Catholicism.

Look at the numbers. Catholic hospitals admit about 5.6 million people annually. That's one out of every six persons seeking hospital care in the United States. Catholic Charities serves more than 9 million people annually. Catholic colleges and universities teach 850,000 students annually. Among those served are Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, atheists, agnostics and members of any other religious or irreligious group you can name.

Our country cannot afford to lose these services, yet that is what will happen under the current proposal.

Please ensure adequate conscience protection for all Americans, but redefining Religious Employers to include all church organizations.

Sincerely,

Christina Jones, RN BSN

*~There is no footprint so small that it cannot leave an imprint on the world~*