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. "Religious Refusal" to preventative care
and contraception is gender based discrimination!