

**From:** [Joanna Morgan](#)  
**To:** [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)  
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Women are capable of making decisions for themselves and should have the freedom to control their own bodies. They do not need or want others controlling their access to healthcare. This country was founded on religious freedom. Why would you listen to religious extremists? Fortunately we are not a Muslim country, but some factions continue to attack and control women's right to obtain contraception and abortion when medically necessary.

If religious refusal exemptions are included, bosses will be able to opt out just to save money not because of religious preference. Having unwanted babies can result in too many mouths to feed and overpopulation. Sickness, starvation and or crime can result. It doesn't make any sense.

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.

For the sake of sanity, 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.

**Joanna Morgan**