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To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Date: Thursday, August 11, 2011 9:56:52 AM

I strongly urge 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.

“Religious refusal” exemptions unjustly deny women access to contraceptive services.. Religiously-run health providers should not be exempted since 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.

In a country where recent studies reveal that 17% of women are the victims of rape or attempted rape, it is imperative that women have access to safe, reliable birth control as a critical component of preventive care. This is particularly true since statistics show that the rate of maternal death has increased dramatically during the past decade. No woman should be subjected to an unwanted pregnancy. It is fundamentally unfair that to date women have been expected to bear the total cost of birth control, which can be substantial, alone.

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.

Linda Yazvac MD