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To: E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA
Subject: Women's Preventive Health
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To the Department of Health and Human Services:

The United States of America cares for the plight of women around the world in helping them receive basic health care, including family health services. Can we do less for the women citizens of our own country? I join with the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in asking you to accept the recommendations of the Institute of Medicine, pertaining 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, while 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.