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Group Health Plans and Health Insurance Issuers Relating to Coverage of Preventive Services under Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Amendment

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General Comment

As a concerned citizen I call for the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to reject the Institute of Medicine's recommendations - Clinical Preventive Services: Closing the Gap. These recommendations effectively identify pregnancy as a disease and are an affront to the consciences of those forced to implement these recommendations and to myself who would be forced by lawful payment of taxes to subsidize practices I find morally reprehensible to the dignity of the human person.

While proposing noteworthy services such as screening for gestational diabetes and support for breastfeeding, these recommendations demonstrate a disregard for the gift of human life and promote risky sexual behavior through contraceptive education. The increase of contraceptive education and distribution of contraceptives will do nothing to address the sexual promiscuity that is the source of many clinical concerns. Moreover, contraceptives have not increased the dignity and value of the woman but have instead made her an object of use and have directly contributed to the destruction of the fundamental family cell in our society. Direct governmental support of contraception and sterilization must be rejected.

Additionally, the narrow religious exemption proposed by the HHS communicates a desire of the HHS to remove the Catholic Church from her mission of employing and serving the needs of those who are not of the same faith. How narrow would the service of Church be if she was limited, by our government, to inculcation of the faith and to hiring and serving only her own. In addition, the expense to the government and to the American citizens would be far greater than any "savings" found under the "preventive" services proposed by IOM and accepted by HHS.

This new threat to conscience makes it especially critical for Congress to pass the "Respect for Rights of Conscience Act" (HR 1179).