

# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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**Docket:** EBSA-2010-0018

Interim Final Rules for Group Health Plans and Health Insurance Issuers Relating to Coverage of Preventive Services Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

**Comment On:** EBSA-2010-0018-0002

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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Comment on FR Doc # 2011-19684

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## General Comment

Dear Sir or Ma'am:

I am writing to share my grave concern over your recently released guidelines for implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), and to request broadening of the religious exemption before August 2012.

The PPACA guidelines require most health insurance plans—including those offered by private employers—to provide full access to birth control, as well as abortion-inducing drugs such as “Ella” and “the morning after pill.” This completely eliminates the right of employers to follow their conscience and refuse to offer birth control drugs to their employees in company-funded health care plans. Many employers object to using their company resources to pay for birth control, and many more strongly object to using company resources to pay for abortion-inducing drugs.

The religious exemption you provide is extremely narrow and will only apply to churches and other houses of worship, and possibly denominational seminaries. Religious organizations, most religious colleges, and other religious employers who have conscientious objections to offering birth control or abortion-inducing drugs will be forced to choose between abhorrent options. They will have to decide whether to end their insurance programs—which will hurt millions of employees across the nation—or violate their conscience by including in their insurance programs birth control and abortion-inducing drugs, which they believe murder an unborn person.

I believe the only way to protect freedom of religion and freedom of conscience is to broaden the religious exemption to also include religious organizations, religious colleges, and employer-funded

private health insurance plans if the employer has a conscientious objection to using corporate funds to pay for birth control or abortion-inducing drugs.

Thank you for your consideration and service to our great nation.

Sincerely, Hannah Kleeberger