

REPLY TO:

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- ☐ 721 FEDERAL BUILDING
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United States Senate

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1501

February 7, 2012

REPLY TO:

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- ☐ 307 FEDERAL BUILDING
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The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius,

I write to express serious reservations with the rule issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on January 20, 2012, mandating that religious-affiliated charities, schools, and hospitals provide coverage for controversial contraceptive products. This decision would force many groups, including charities, schools, and hospitals, to provide coverage of contraceptive and abortifacient products despite strong objections to these drugs rooted in religious beliefs.

The federal government does not have the right to tell religious groups to provide a service that violates their faith. It is disturbing that under the broad HHS requirement and narrow exemption, religious affiliated organizations will face a choice that Americans should not confront: adhere to their freedom of conscience or pay a fine of up to \$2,000 per employee. As currently written, this mandate will result in litigation that could be avoided if HHS issued a regulation that showed greater respect for religious freedom.

This rule highlights this Administration's continued invasive role in designing the health care benefits available to Americans and underscores one of the numerous concerns Americans have with the Affordable Care Act. That the definition of a preventative benefit services has morphed into a requirement to force Americans to buy a product that violates their conscience demonstrates the dramatic overreach of the law into Americans' personal freedoms and liberties. This burdensome and morally dubious regulation stands against more than 200 years of our nation's proud history of religious and individual liberty. I strongly urge you to rescind this rule and ensure that any future issuance of a revised rule respects the conscience of not only medical providers, but healthcare consumers and faith-based organizations as well.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley

Committee Assignments:

AGRICULTURE
BUDGET
FINANCE

CO-CHAIRMAN,
INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
CONTROL CAUCUS

RANKING MEMBER,
JUDICIARY