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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 8, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear President Obama and Secretary Sebelius:

I write to express my opposition to the Department of Health and Human Services sterilizations and contraceptives mandate.

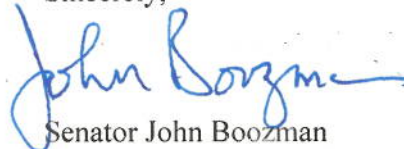
Religious freedom is a fundamental American truth enshrined in our Constitution. The government must never force faith-based institutions to abandon central tenets of their religion. Your decision to require religious hospitals, schools, charities, advocacy groups, and other organizations to provide sterilization and contraceptive services, which conflict with their religion teachings, is a gross government overstep. This is an unprecedented, unnecessary federal mandate that violates First Amendment religious freedoms.

In practice, I am also concerned with the impact this rule will have on millions of students, veterans, children, seniors, single parents, individuals with disabilities, and others who rely on religious organizations for important humanitarian services. Faith-based charities, schools, and hospitals provide a critical safety net in communities across our country. These entities recognize our moral obligation to care for the least of us. However, many have said they will not operate in a way that violates their religious teachings. This will threaten education, healthcare, and social service for millions of Americans. In short, faith-based humanitarian organizations need an advocate in Washington—not an enemy. Your decision is a needless, hostile burden that jeopardizes their work.

In addition, this mandate reaffirms the fears that so many Americans have about your administration's approach to healthcare: Washington-centered rules, controls, and commands that prioritize politics over patients. The government should always defer to patients, physicians, families, and religious organizations when it comes to complex healthcare decisions. Far-reaching federal regulations, particularly those that drive up healthcare costs for everyone, regardless of whether they want or need contraceptives, frighten Americans and cause them to lose faith in government.

I respectfully urge you to take immediate action and reverse this decision.

Sincerely,



Senator John Boozman

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