



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 21, 2011

Free Contraceptives under ObamaCare? HHS Says Maybe

As if the healthcare law was not controversial enough, enter free contraceptives. The Institute of Medicine recommends that insurance companies provide free contraceptives to all women, and the Department of Health and Human Services appears to be receptive to the idea.

According to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, the suggestion is “historic” and she praised the Institute of Medicine for it.

The proposal already has the support of some lawmakers.

Rep. Lois Capps, (D-Calif.) said, “The request for the study actually came out of the healthcare legislation and I am pleased that the secretary has indicated that the department will implement it quickly.”

Not surprisingly, NARAL Pro-Choice America issued a statement of support for the proposal. “Currently, nearly one in three women finds it difficult to pay for birth control. We are confident that the Obama administration will adopt...the recommendations.”

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Conservative groups are opposed to the idea. Sandy Rios, vice president for Family PAC Federal, declares, “It’s feminist pork. It’s a...wish list. It’s a dream list for feminists.”

Fox News reports:

And other conservative groups oppose the move, in part because it would require insurance companies to offer, and employers to provide, services to which they may morally object. That includes the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

USCCB spokeswoman Deirdre McQuade explains,

If accepted these recommendations would mean that virtually all private employers, private companies, organizations, such as the USCCB, would be required by law to cover in their insurance to employees, these problematic procedures, drugs and devices.

While some contend that the proposal would deter abortions, conservatives oppose the notion, particularly because Plan B drugs would be one of the free contraceptives provided under the recommendation.

“Ella, in particular, which was approved for emergency contraception can actually disrupt what the AMA (American Medical Association) calls an established pregnancy after implantation, which by anyone’s definition, is an abortion,” said McQuade.

Many lawmakers were [hesitant](#) to vote in favor of the healthcare law without being explicitly assured





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that abortions would not be paid for with taxpayer dollars. In an effort to assuage those concerns, President Obama signed an executive order on abortion funding limits, which managed to sway 12 pro-life Democrats who otherwise would have voted against the bill. However, with the proposal for free contraceptives, including Plan B pills, this promise may no longer be kept.

The proposal may be adopted under regulation, which means that it would not be subject to congressional approval.

However, Congress is looking to pass legislation that would allow at least those who object to the proposal to opt out of it.

Photo: Emergency Contraception (and possible abortifacient) known as Plan B is displayed at Planned Parenthood in Springfield, Ill.: AP Images



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