

FLORIDA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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MICHAEL B. SHEEDY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



September 20, 2016

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
Department of Health and Human Services
Attn.: CMS-9931-NC
P.O. Box 8010
Baltimore, MD 21244-8010

Re: Coverage for Contraceptive Services, CMS-9931-NC

Dear Sir or Madam:

The moral concerns of the Conference for contraceptive coverage are well known and are related in *Zubik v. Burwell*, which has reached the Supreme Court of the United States. It is harmful public policy to require health plans to cover contraceptives and sterilization procedures, but if the Administration decides to continue such a policy, it should not coerce anyone, over their religious objection, to issue, sponsor, administer, purchase, or otherwise arrange for or facilitate such coverage.

Any coverage of contraceptives or sterilization procedures that the Administration mandates should be truly independent of plans that do not include such coverage. To be truly independent, contraceptive and sterilization coverage should be provided through a separate policy, with a separate enrollment process, a separate insurance card, and a separate payment source, and offered to individuals through a separate communication. No further involvement should be required of any individual or organization with a religious objection to contraceptive or sterilization coverage.

People should not be "automatically" (or without regard to their religious objections) enrolled in a plan with contraceptive or sterilization coverage. No individual or organization with a religious objection should be required to participate, directly or indirectly, in arranging for or facilitating contraceptive or sterilization coverage.

These changes will obviate the need for continued litigation over the most contested federal rule in history and resolve the ongoing and unnecessary conflict with a significant section of the religious community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael B. Sheedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'S' at the end.

Michael B. Sheedy