

# STAND UP FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

## STOP OBAMA'S HHS MANDATE

### **What is the HHS Mandate and how does it violate religious freedom?**

In January, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a mandate under the Affordable Care Act (also known as "Obamacare") that requires all employer health plans to provide free contraceptives, sterilizations and abortion-inducing drugs, regardless of any moral or religious objections.

The ministries of institutions like Catholic schools, hospitals and charities—educating the young, caring for the sick, feeding the hungry—are not considered sufficiently religious to qualify for the Mandate's narrow "religious exemption."

Not only will such institutions be forced to provide services that directly contradict the teachings of their faith, but—more alarmingly—the federal government is claiming the right to decide for religious institutions what constitutes their ministry.

### **Isn't this really all about providing access to contraception?**

No: contraceptives are already widely available. "Access" to something does not mean having it paid for by someone else—especially against their moral convictions.

But the HHS Mandate doesn't stop with free contraceptives: it also requires employer health plans to provide free sterilizations and abortion-inducing drugs.

More importantly, as described above, the American ideal of religious liberty is at stake. This isn't really about contraception—it's about the First Amendment.

### **Didn't President Obama work out these religious objections?**

In February, President Obama offered an "accommodation" whereby insurance providers, rather than employers, would pay for the services to which religious employers have moral objections. But this does not solve the problem.

At the end of the day, the HHS Mandate still forces all employers to provide health plans with free contraceptives, sterilizations and abortion-inducing drugs.

Moreover, the assault on our cherished freedom of religion—with the federal government now defining for all of us what constitutes authentic religious ministry—continues.

### **What can I do to help stop the HHS Mandate?**

Join our effort to stop the HHS Mandate! Here's what you can do:

- ✓ Get this Fact Sheet from the website listed below and print out copies for all your friends, family members and co-workers.
- ✓ Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask your Congressman and both U.S. Senators to support legislation overturning the HHS Mandate.
- ✓ Vote for candidates who respect freedom of religion and freedom of conscience in the primary and general elections this year.
- ✓ Visit the website listed below to sign onto the effort and learn more ways we can work together to stop the HHS Mandate.

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