

Dear

In early August, the Department for Health and Human Services released guidelines that would force Catholic institutions to subsidize through their health care plans contraception, sterilization procedures and pharmaceuticals that even result in abortion.

It was announced on Jan. 20 by Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the U.S. Department for Health and Human Services, that this mandate is affirmed and that non-profit institutions, including the Catholic Church, have one year to adapt to the mandate.

This is a direct threat to the religious liberty of Catholics, freedom of conscience and the social service ministry of the Catholic Church. The so-called 'religious exemption' in the mandate is no exemption at all, as it would require any Catholic institution (that serves non-Catholics or employs non-Catholics) to violate Catholic belief, discontinue to provide health care or close its doors.

I ask that you do all possible to rescind the 'Preventive Service Mandate' as an unprecedented federal interference in the right of Catholics to serve their community without violating their fundamental moral beliefs.

Sincerely,