We, the undersigned, strongly support access to life-affirming health care for all, and the ability of secular and religious groups and individuals to provide and receive such care. That is why we have signed objections to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services forcing almost all private health plans to cover sterilization procedures and contraceptives drugs, including drugs that cause an early abortion.

As written, the rule will force Catholic organizations that play a vital role in providing health care and other needed services either to violate their conscience or severely curtail those services. This would harm both religious freedom and access to health care.

The HHS mandate puts many faith-based organizations and individuals in an untenable position. But it also harms society as a whole by undermining a long American tradition of religious freedom and conscience. In a pluralistic society, our health care system should respect the religious and ethical convictions of all. We ask Congress, the Administration, and our fellow Americans to acknowledge this truth and work with us to reform the law accordingly.

For the complete list of signatories, please visit www.usccb.org/conscience.