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## M.D. TO BE

# Thank you, Mr. Obama

By **Marianne DiNapoli** on February 10, 2012 at 10:14 AM

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As a future OB/GYN, I couldn't be happier about the decision by the Department of Health and Human Services to require all hospitals to provide insurance plans covering contraception to their employees. Catholic bishops are understandably upset by this decision, as Catholicism does not permit the use of any type of birth control. Those who oppose this new mandate believe that the constitutional right to freedom of religion is being violated, since these hospitals are forced to offer a service that is against their beliefs.

However, considering 98% of Catholic women have used some form of contraception in their lives, it might be time for the leaders of the church to amend their official stance on birth control. An average woman spends 25-30 years of her life avoiding pregnancy; it is an integral part of providing primary care for women. In addition, hormonal oral contraceptive pills are used as treatment for many common diseases, such as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome and Endometriosis. I doubt the bishops would want to deprive women who are suffering from these conditions access to affordable treatment. Furthermore, just because the Catholic hospitals must provide these insurance plans in no way means Catholic employees are forced to use birth control!

Apparently, President Obama is planning to announce today some form of "accommodation" on this new ruling to appease Catholic organizations. I'm eager to hear what it is, and I'm hoping it does not compromise the principle of providing affordable healthcare to all women regardless of their place of employment.

What are *your* thoughts on the issue? Do you support President Obama's mandate?