

COMMISSIONER OF SECURITIES & INSURANCE

MONICA J. LINDEEN
COMMISSIONER



OFFICE OF THE MONTANA
STATE AUDITOR

July 26, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary of Health and Human Services
US Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius,

The no-cost preventative service provisions included in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will make a dramatic difference for many Montanans. As you determine what qualifies as a no-cost preventative service under the ACA, I urge you to include birth control in the list of services to be provided free of charge to consumers.

Family planning and birth control are essential components of preventing unintended pregnancies and reducing the number of abortions we see in Montana. For the 98 percent of women who will use some form of contraceptive care in their lives, birth control is basic, indispensable healthcare. No-cost birth control will empower women to make their own decisions about when to start a family without the burden of large, out-of-pocket expenses each month.

I'm proud to note Montana law already requires the health insurance companies I regulate to cover birth control equitably when compared to other prescription medications. Including birth control in the list of no-cost preventative services will bring national standards in line with Montana values.

Experts from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recently recommended full coverage for family-planning care. I urge you to adopt their recommendation and include birth control in the list of no-cost preventative services. Thank you for your consideration and quick action on this matter.

Sincerely,

Monica J. Lindeen
Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
Montana State Auditor