

CHARLIE CRIST
13TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA
www.crist.house.gov

427 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-5961

696 1ST AVENUE NORTH, SUITE 203
ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33701
(727) 318-6770

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0913

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND
CONSUMER CREDIT
MONETARY POLICY AND TRADE
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
SPACE
ENVIRONMENT

January 26, 2018

Secretary Alex Azar
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert Humphrey Building, Room 416 G
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

Congratulations on your recent confirmation as Secretary of Health and Human Services. I look forward to working with you to protect and promote the health and well-being of all Americans. In that vein, I write regarding the newly established Conscience and Religious Freedom Division within the Office of Civil Rights. As the co-chair of the 2018 National Prayer Breakfast, I am deeply committed to the principles of religious freedom and liberty upon which our nation was founded, which are enshrined in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

I also know that the sacred principle of religious freedom must never be distorted to justify or permit discrimination against any of God's children. To do so would be heretical to the fundamental teachings of the world's great religions and undercut the standing of believers to practice freely as they see fit. I pray you agree. To protect the integrity of the Administration's laudable goal of advancing religious freedom, please provide specific guidance clarifying whether the principles of conscience or religious freedom would allow a medical provider or associate receiving public funds to refuse to provide the following services:

1. Birth control prescriptions
2. Emergency contraception
3. Lifesaving abortion
4. In vitro fertilization, including for unmarried patients, same-sex couples, and interracial couples
5. Medical care for a patient living with HIV/AIDS
6. Medical care for a patient who is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer
7. Pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prescriptions
8. HIV testing
9. Hormone therapy for transgender or intersex patients
10. Gender confirmation surgery
11. Navigator assistance for an Affordable Care Act applicant who is lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer
12. HPV vaccines
13. Mental health care or a reference for mental health services

Your specificity – particularly surrounding non-discrimination for women, members of the LGBTQ community, and persons living with HIV/AIDS – will go a long way to providing peace of mind for those in Florida's 13th Congressional District and across the country who have faced or fear well-documented discrimination and abuse by medical providers. Given the urgent medical needs of some individuals in impacted communities, I respectfully request your urgent attention and expeditious response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charlie Crist", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Charlie Crist
UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN