

ASSEMBLY HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 209

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 13, 2019

The Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee reports favorably Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 209.

This concurrent resolution condemns two federal final rules that provide “conscience protections” to employers and individuals who have a religious or a moral objection to health insurance that covers contraceptive methods. The final rules were released by the United States Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Labor on November 7, 2018, and broaden exemptions from the legal mandate for full insurance coverage of contraception, under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The rules allow that, in general, most non-governmental employers, including nonprofits, for-profits, non-governmental institutions of higher education, and insurers, can deny health insurance coverage for contraception based on religious or moral objections. Under current federal law, exemptions are primarily offered to religious employers.

The ACA’s contraception coverage mandate has made access to the full range of contraceptive methods affordable to millions of women and has significantly reduced out-of-pocket spending. According to the National Women’s Law Center, nearly 62.8 million women across the country, 1.9 million of whom are New Jersey residents, currently have insurance coverage of birth control, with no out-of-pocket costs. As a result of the ACA’s contraception coverage mandate, millions of American women have saved a total of at least \$1.4 billion in out-of-pocket health care costs.