

Louisiana College sues over contraceptive mandate

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ALEXANDRIA, La. (ABP)—A Baptist college in Louisiana is suing the federal government over a requirement that religious schools and hospitals cover contraceptives in insurance for their employees, including birth control pills that induce abortion.

The Alliance Defense Fund filed a federal lawsuit in Alexandria, La., on behalf of [Louisiana College](#), a private Christian school affiliated with the Louisiana Baptist Convention. The lawsuit claims new rules mandating coverage of FDA-approved contraceptives violate the college's confession of faith, the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, which upholds the "sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death."

The lawsuit cites SBC resolutions opposing the manufacture and sale of RU-486, called the "abortion pill" because it is taken to end an early pregnancy after unprotected sex or if other birth control fails. It also points to FDA approval in 2010 of ella, an emergency contraceptive effective up to five days after conception.

The lawsuit says requiring Louisiana College to provide health insurance for its employees that covers abortion-inducing drugs would violate "sincerely held religious beliefs regarding abortion." It seeks to block enforcement of the contraceptive mandate as a violation of the school's constitutional rights under the First and Fourth amendments, as well as the [Religious Freedom Restoration Act](#).

The lawsuit describes a compromise announced Feb. 10 by President Obama requiring insurance companies to pay for birth control if religious employers object as "fictitious," because insurers would pass those costs on

to employers through premiums. It says that even trying to determine whether a school like Louisiana College qualifies for exemption from the rule as a religious institution requires the government to examine religious beliefs and doctrines in ways that excessively entangle church and state.