

March 25, 2003

**H 642. CONSCIENCE PROTECTION/CONTRACEPTIVES.** *TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE CONSCIENCE PROTECTION IN THE INSURANCE LAW PERTAINING TO COVERAGE FOR PRESCRIPTION CONTRACEPTIVE DRUGS OR DEVICES AND FOR OUTPATIENT CONTRACEPTIVE SERVICES.* Current GS 58-3-178 requires that health benefit plans provide coverage for prescription contraceptive drugs or devices and outpatient contraceptive services, but exempts religious employer from requirement where drugs or devices are contrary to its religious tenets. Act amends GS 58-3-178(c)(3) definition of "outpatient contraceptive services" to exclude medical services, drugs, or devices used to induce an abortion. Adds new GS 58-3-178(c)(4)c to exclude from definition of "prescribed contraceptive drugs or devices" those that interfere with the development of an embryo after fertilization. Act deletes exemption for religious employers and replaces it with new GS 58-3-178(e1), providing that no employer is required to provide insurance coverage for contraceptive benefits or services where employer certifies that those benefits are contrary to its religious beliefs or moral convictions. Further requires that employer notify employees that contraception is not covered by health benefit plan.

**Intro. by Wood.**

Ref. to Health	GS 58
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