

Catholics (and Protestants) on the contraception mandate

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

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The [new Century editorial](#) offers qualified support for the Catholic bishops' position in their flap with the White House over contraception coverage:

We disagree with the Catholic bishops' stance on birth control—as do a great many American Catholics—and we think that the common good is enhanced by providing wide access to contraception. Nevertheless, we think the common good is also enhanced when religious believers—and religious institutions—are free to act in the public square without sacrificing their religious identity.

A new [survey](#) from the Public Religion Research Institute puts some numbers to that "great many American Catholics" reference. Lisa Fullam has some [helpful general thoughts](#) on this.

As for me, I'm interested in the fact that Catholics are far more likely to support the contraception mandate than evangelicals are--and somewhat more likely than mainline Protestants, too. This is true both for the mandate generally and for HHS's decision not to exempt Catholic colleges and hospitals.

So are Protestants--most of whose churches do not take an anti-contraception position, or ask their members to--more in line with the bishops on this particular bit of Catholic teaching than Catholics are? Or is it just that there's some correlation between being Protestant and being politically inclined to oppose most anything that starts with "Employers should be required to..." no matter what comes next?