

**MCM**  
**McMURRY**  
**C O L L E G E**

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

August 24, 1988

Mr. George D. Cole  
Division Director Elementary and Secondary  
Education Division II  
Department of Education  
1200 Main Tower Building  
Dallas, TX 75202



Reference: 06882135

Dear Mr. Cole:

I am happy to write this letter as a result of our telephone conversation of August 10, 1988, and your letter of August 11, 1988. I am also grateful for the extension of the deadline for this letter to about September 10, 1988.

McMurry College respectfully requests an exemption from the provision of a general health insurance coverage for pregnancy for the students of McMurry College. We seek this exemption based on religious grounds.

1. The Northwest Texas and the New Mexico Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church control McMurry college. McMurry College operates within the basic religious tenets of the annual conferences and the document of basic beliefs of our denomination entitled The Book of Discipline, 1984. In The Book of Discipline, 1984, paragraph 71 (p. 90) under the family and marriage section, the position of the United Methodist Church is that we honor the institution of the family, and we do not condone sex outside of marriage. Given this position of the church, McMurry College does not wish to offer coverage for pregnancy in our health insurance program to unmarried students.

2. We request exemption from section 106.40 paragraph b, (4). Paraphrased, pregnancy is to be treated in the same manner and under the same policies as any other temporary disability. I understand the complaint your office received alleges that the student health insurance plan made available by McMurry College is in violation of section number 106.40 paragraph b, (4).

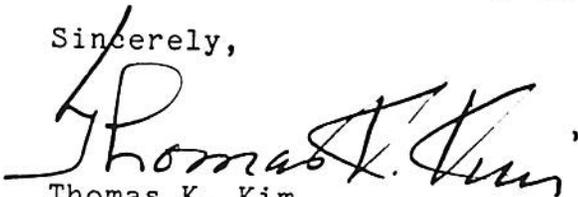
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The student insurance is for full-time students, dependent coverage is not required and maternity coverage is optional. If maternity coverage were not optional, additional premiums would be required by unmarried males and females. The tenet from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church that covers this request for exemption is "Although men and women are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sex between a man and a woman is only to be clearly affirmed in the marriage bond." This is found on page 90 of The Book of Discipline.

In summary, McMurry College requests exemption from section 106.40 paragraph b, (4) for the following reasons:

1. McMurry College is a United Methodist Church related institution.
2. The United Methodist Church does not condone sex outside the marriage bond.
3. The overwhelming majority of the students of McMurry College are unmarried.
4. If McMurry College were to issue maternity coverage in its student health insurance to all students routinely, we would be tacitly condoning sex outside marriage. Such a practice is against our religious belief.

Sincerely,



Thomas K. Kim  
President

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Enclosure: Student health plan application