

## Testimony Regarding the Practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

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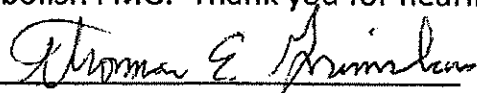
I am here to provide testimony regarding three bills relating to the practice of FGM or Female Genital Mutilation: Bills 5142 submitted by Representative Kurt Vail, Bill 5361 submitted by Representative William Petit MD and Bill 505 by Senator John Kissel. These bills all call for the prohibition of the practice of FGM in the State of Connecticut.

What is FGM? It is a range of procedures that are done on female genital organs for no medical reason or purpose. It is a brutal procedure which often involves the removal of part or all of the clitoris and the inner and outer labia. The entire cut area is then sewn up leaving a tiny opening for urination. This barbaric procedure is often done without anesthesia by non- medical people on teenagers, on small children, and even babies. They are often either captured or lured to a site, held down against their will and brutally savaged sometimes by family members and even strangers while hysterically crying and begging for release.

There have been 18 major medical complications reported regarding this procedure ranging from mental health issues, to severe infections and even death. There is not one medical benefit provided by this procedure. It is done to prevent women from having sexual relations and remain under control of men. This is not a minor problem. Worldwide over 200 million females from 30 countries are now living with this nightmare including America. This not a religious problem but a cultural one.

Imagine coming home and finding your daughter or sister forever damaged by this savage act. Many States in America have now passed this legislation including New York, California and Michigan with overwhelming bipartisan support. Practice of this dangerous barbaric procedure should result in an extensive prison term as passed in Michigan. Please we respectfully ask you to pass legislation to abolish FMG. Thank you for hearing us.

Tom Grimshaw



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