



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Judiciary Committee

March 24, 2021

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[Senate Bill 1069](#), An Act Concerning Female Genital Mutilation

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information on Senate Bill 1069. This legislation would require DPH, in consultation with The Women's Center at the University of Connecticut Health Center, to conduct a study of female genital mutilation in the state and to identify any public health interventions that might result in the elimination of any procedures conducted as part of the practice of female genital mutilation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

The proposed study would identify knowledge and training concerning communication, cultural competence, clinical identification of female genital mutilation, clinical management practices and service configuration necessary to counsel women affected by female genital mutilation. Additionally, the bill would require DPH to evaluate the effects of banning female genital mutilation on women seeking reproductive and maternal health services, including prenatal care.

DPH recognizes that female genital mutilation is a significant health concern throughout the country and the world, with serious consequences to public health, and we commend the goals of this bill. However, the Department does not have ownership of individual-level patient care data or insurance claims data, nor do we have staff with obstetric or female genital mutilation subject matter expertise, and thus are not equipped to lead the proposed study. Studies such as these are usually conducted with epidemiologists, statisticians, and others with medical expertise not presently available to DPH.

DPH would be happy to further discuss this bill with the proponents and to provide guidance regarding a more appropriate entity to lead such a study. Thank you for your consideration of this information.

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