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Alþingi

Kirkjustræti
150 Reykjavík

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Ágæta Alþingi / Dear Members of the Parliament,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to commend you for consideration of the bill to prohibit the circumcision of minors in Iceland, absent a medical reason.

I have long been an "Intactivist" here in the United States where we seek this same kind of legal protection for boys, as we do for girls.

I am aware that your government faces the same objection from religious sectors that practice this procedure as a ritual of initiation into a religion or adulthood.

In my considered and researched view regarding International Law and the decrees of the United Nations of the Rights of the Child, and the Right to Religious Freedom, I am convinced that one's right to religious freedom is an individual right, not one to impose on another, including one's own children, by marking it in their flesh.

It is certainly normal for a child to grow up in the religious faith and customs of his or her community, but nevertheless maintains the autonomy of choice upon reaching the age of reason or adulthood. They should not have to live with diminished genitals upon that time in their life. In other words, one's religious freedom ends at the body of another person, whose right to an intact body, bodily integrity, is sacrosanct, to use a religious word.

Thank you for the courage and conviction to inscribe this right into Icelandic Law. The affected religious communities will then have to live within the law, including International Law, rather than insisting on being an exception to it. Ancient religious customs of child sacrifice eventually gave way to the law, and so can they.

Sincerely,

David J. Biviano, Ph.D.