

DOCTORS OPPOSING CIRCUMCISION URGES ICELAND TO RESTRICT MALE CIRCUMCISION TO MEDICAL NEED ONLY

Doctors Opposing Circumcision
Doctorsopposingcircumcision.org
Office of the General Counsel
2040 Westlake Avenue North, #420
Seattle, Washington, USA 98107-4137
docdirector.geisheker@gmail.com
+1 206. 465. 6636

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Alþingi
Kirkjustræti
150 Reykjavík

Efni: Umsögn um frumvarp til laga um breytingu á almennum hegningarlögum (bann við umskurði drengja), 148. löggjafarþing, 114. mál.

Ágæta Alþingi / Dear Members of the Parliament:

Our registered international physicians' charity, Doctors Opposing Circumcision, respectfully asks you to **please support the proposed restrictions on male circumcision in Iceland –unless there is proven medical need.**

We believe that Iceland has this obligation under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which Iceland has ratified. That UN Convention, at Art 24, sec. 3, declares:

*“States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to **abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.**”*
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx> -

As you will know, ‘medicalised’ circumcision was a puritanical invention of English-language doctors before the discovery of germs. It has NO place in modern medical care except for consenting adults or proven medical need. A full discussion, with references to modern science, of our many objections to unnecessary and painful male genital cutting, including the recent HIV claims, may be found at:

<https://www.doctorsopposingcircumcision.org>

Circumcision amputates healthy, functional, sensitive, sexual tissue that no normal adult male would easily give up. Please see our website for further medical information too extensive to detail in this brief message.

The recent complaints of the religious community are easily answered:

ISLAM does not require circumcision. It is merely cultural, not divine, and the Qu’ran does not demand it. See <https://www.facebook.com/muslimsagainstcirc/> or

<http://www.quranicpath.com/misconceptions/circumcision.html> -

JUDAISM has an alternative ceremony, *Brit Shalom*, a welcome ceremony without any cutting, which is increasingly popular among Jews around the world. The site below was founded and is maintained by our Jewish Executive Vice-President, Mark D. Reiss, M.D.

See: <http://www.britshalom.info>

and

<http://www.beyondthebris.com/2012/04/choosing-brit-shalom-over-brit-milah.html>

Claims that such a restriction will drive religious minorities from Iceland are an exaggeration, pure scare-tactics, as the practice is not a '*sine qua non*' in either religion.

Moreover, we need to protect the religious freedom of the BOY himself. Not everyone stays with his family's religious heritage, and the child's future choices need to be preserved. Parents do not own their children, and cannot do as they please to their child's body.

Your example may start an important worldwide conversation about the worthiness of ancient practices injurious to children, which the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes as a universal concern.

Once again, we urge you, respectfully, to **please support the ban in Iceland on non-medical, merely cultural, unnecessary, male circumcision.**

Respectfully submitted,

John V. Geisheker, JD, LL.M.,

Executive Director; General Counsel,

on behalf of the Board Members and Advisors of Doctors Opposing Circumcision:

George C. Denniston, MD, MPH, President

Mark D. Reiss, MD, Executive Vice-President

George Hill, Vice-President for Bioethics

Morris L. Sorrells, MD, Pediatric consultant

Andrew R. Biles, Jr, MD, Pediatric consultant

John W. Travis, MD, MPH, Infant Wellness

Mat Masem, MD, Professor of Medicine,

Michelle Storms, MD, Family Medicine

Gabriel Symonds, MB, GP consultant

Sarah E. Strandjord, MD, Pediatric consultant

James Snyder, MD, Urology consultant

Adrienne Carmack, MD, Urology consultant

Zenas Baer, JD, Legal consultant

Michaëlle M. Wetteland, RN, MMA, Nursing

Amanda M. Morse, MPH, Maternal & child health

Gillian Longley, RN, BSN, MSS, Neonatal ICU

Janet Heimlich, *The Child-Friendly Faith Project*

John V. Geisheker, JD, LL.M
Executive Director,
General Counsel,
Doctors Opposing Circumcision
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Seattle, WA 98109
tel +1. 206. 465. 6636

Advocating Genital Integrity for All Children Everywhere