



## **Kentucky FGM Legislation Sample Support Letter**

**Sample Subject:** Prohibit Female Genital Mutilation: Support an FGM Ban in Kentucky

**Sample Text:**

I am writing to urge you to support Senator Julie Raque Adams in her effort to ban female genital mutilation in the upcoming legislative session, which would send an important message that this abuse is a serious crime and will not be tolerated in Kentucky.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is any procedure involving the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs and is often performed on girls between the ages of four and fourteen to ensure their virginity until marriage. This dangerous procedure has no health benefits and has lifelong health and psychological consequences. Immediately following the procedure, girls are at risk for severe pain, shock, bleeding, bacterial infection, and injury to nearby tissue. In the long term, girls and women who have suffered this procedure are at risk for recurrent bladder and urinary tract infections, cysts, infertility, and complications during intercourse and childbirth.

The threat of FGM is a reality for a substantial number of girls in the U.S. While many believe this is a custom that only occurs in foreign countries, research conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that approximately 513,000 women and girls in the U.S. have either been subjected to FGM or were at risk. In Kentucky alone, 1,845 women and girls are estimated to be at risk.

Enacting such a law in Kentucky would have a significant deterrent effect and would send a strong message that this conduct is not acceptable in the state. I strongly urge you to support this legislation and take the necessary steps to move it forward in your leadership capacity, as we can no longer rely on protections at the federal level. In late 2018, the federal anti-FGM law was struck down as exceeding congressional authority under the Commerce Clause and the Necessary and Proper Clause of the U.S. Constitution. Only 35 states have laws, with your help we can make Kentucky number 36.

I therefore urge you to support or cosponsor the anti-FGM bill introduced by Senator Julie Raque Adams.



Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,