



BREAKING THE SILENCE
PROTECTING LIBERTY
CELEBRATING DIGNITY

Ban Female Genital Mutilation in Montana

Subject: Support Legislation to End Female Genital Mutilation in Montana

Sample Text:

Dear [Representative/Senator] [Last Name],

Protecting **all** girls from female genital mutilation (FGM) is very important to me, which is why I'm writing as your constituent today to urge you to support comprehensive anti-FGM legislation, including education and outreach for communities and professionals in Montana.

FGM is a practice that involves altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical reasons, and it is internationally recognized as a human rights violation. **FGM can result in negative health consequences, difficulties during childbirth, lifelong psychological and emotional trauma, and in some cases, even death.**

Our elected officials need to prioritize this important issue.

The practice of FGM is generally motivated by beliefs about what is considered proper sexual behavior and cultural ideas of femininity and modesty. It is not, however, mandated by any major religion, although it has been adapted by patriarchal religious sects and societies. FGM is also considered a way to reduce a woman's libido, safeguarding virginity and marital fidelity.

On January 5, 2021, the federal law banning FGM was reaffirmed, and although it helps provide protection for those at risk of FGM, state-level bans can go a step further to make sure this practice is not tolerated in the United States. **In fact, the best way to ensure the safety of women and girls is to back up the federal ban with comprehensive state legislation.**

A 2016 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that there are 513,000 women and girls in the U.S. who are at risk of or have undergone FGM. According to the Population Reference Bureau, an estimated 302 of those at-risk women and girls live in Montana. I encourage you to act on their behalf and help institute state-level protections. This abuse can't be ignored any longer.

41 states have passed laws banning FGM. Make Montana number 42. I urge you to prioritize passing a comprehensive bill that bans FGM in Montana.

Sincerely,

[Insert Name and Contact Info]