

Susan Frey

From: Rebecca <rebeccaarends@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 8:49 PM
To: Susan Frey
Subject: please forward to all members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

Madame Chair and Members of the Appropriation Subcommittee on Health and Human Services,

Thank you for allowing me to contact you today, and for your service to all Michiganders. I'd like to begin sharing a personal experience. In 2007, I gave birth to my son. At the time, I was insured by the State of Michigan through Medicaid. The nurses asked me twice if I wanted my son circumcised, which is classified as cosmetic surgery under the International Classification of Disease. This procedure costs the taxpayers an average of \$300 through Medicaid/Medicare. I didn't believe amputating healthy, nerve-rich tissue from the sexual organs of my child without pain management was medically necessary shortly after his birth, especially given the potential for complications. At 14 years old, he is VERY glad I left that choice up to him and allowed him agency; if he chooses later in life to be circumcised, extensive pain management options are now available as an infant under 6 months cannot tolerate due to immature liver and kidneys. Additionally, this issue is imperative now more than ever due to Covid-19 and increased risks of any medical procedure.

I come before you today in request to eliminate this coverage of circumcision from the Department of Health and Human Services Budget. In 2018 and 2019, the State paid through Medicaid alone, millions were spent for infant boys to be circumcised. That money spent on circumcision could be put to much better and urgent use.

I support this bill not because I would benefit from it directly, but because this is a fiscally responsible decision in the midst of a financial and health crisis with no clear end in sight. I also support this bill because, as a social worker, I am compelled to give a voice to the voiceless. Please don't hesitate to contact me, NOCIRC of Michigan, or Doctors Against Circumcision if you have any questions about this legislation.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Arends, LMT, LLMSW

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