

March 9, 2021

Respected members of the House and Senate especially those members in the Budget Committee,

Thank you 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 13 years old, he is 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 to ask you 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, \$2.6 million for infant boys to be circumcised. This year, the recommended budget for DHHS includes a \$4.6 million fund for activities such as lead investigations and abatement for homes, physical and behavioral health care programs for Flint children, lead poisoning prevention efforts, and evidence-based home visiting programs. This is only one example of how that money spent on circumcision could be put to much better and urgent use.

I support this 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 end in sight. I also support this because, as a student of social work, I am compelled to give a voice to the voiceless. I respectfully ask that you vote to end this coverage of detrimental and cosmetic surgery, and as soon as possible.

Please don't hesitate to contact me, NOCIRC of Michigan, or Doctors Against Circumcision if you have any questions about this legislation.

Sincerely,

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