



**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families**

Charlie Crist
Governor

Robert A. Butterworth
Secretary

February 21, 2007

Ms. Nicole Blythe

Stuart, Florida

Dear Ms. Blythe:

Thank you for your recent letter to the Governor's Office about your proposal of the Florida Prohibition of Human Mutilation Act. Governor Charlie Crist asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

Florida appreciates your concern for wanting to ensure all children are protected from child abuse. You raised some interesting points in your letter about circumcision of male infants. Circumcision is a common procedure typically done with newborn males once they are medically stable after birth. Debate exists whether there are no medical benefits or if there are some slight medical benefits. The American Academy of Pediatrics has considered this issue for years. Currently, the Academy neither recommends for or against this procedure.

Unlike female circumcision done in unsafe circumstances elsewhere in the world; male circumcision is a carefully done hospital procedure, usually involves pain control, and does not cause appreciable loss of sexual sensation or pain in adulthood.

A difference of opinion exists on the merit of this procedure. However, the Academy and others have never considered this to be physical abuse. An interpretation that this is child abuse would be unique, be at variance with mainstream medical opinion, and result in an assertion that most parents of boys are participating in child abuse.

Thank you again for writing to Governor Crist and for your concern for the safety and well-being of Florida's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patricia Badland'.

Patricia Badland
Director
Office of Family Safety

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