
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN SERVICES TO EXPEDITE THE ADOPTION OF RULES IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 91, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, AND TO OBTAIN ANY FEDERAL WAIVERS, IF NECESSARY, TO DISALLOW MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR ROUTINE CIRCUMCISION FOR NEWBORN MALE INFANTS IN HAWAII.

1 WHEREAS, circumcision of young males has been a long-
2 standing tradition among adherents to certain religions
3 including Judaism, and Christians eventually adopted the
4 practice, although it is unclear why; and

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6 WHEREAS, it is also unclear why one million two hundred
7 thousand circumcisions are performed in the United States each
8 year--more than in any other country when this operation is
9 considered a medically unnecessary procedure; and

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11 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American
12 Academy of Family Practitioners, and the American Medical
13 Association, have all published statements that do not support
14 routine neonatal circumcisions; and

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16 WHEREAS, although there are potential medical benefits,
17 such as reduced incidence of urinary tract infections in
18 circumcised male infants under one year of age and reduced risk
19 of penile cancer in uncircumcised men, these risks are minimal--
20 fewer than one per cent of uncircumcised baby boys get such
21 infections and penile cancer is quite rare; and

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23 WHEREAS, on the other hand, potential adverse complications
24 of circumcision are more likely and include bleeding, poor
25 cosmetic results, adhesions, scarring of the urethral opening,
26 infection, and, in very rare cases, penile amputation or death;
27 and

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29 WHEREAS, parents have chosen circumcision for their newborn
30 sons so that their sons will "look" normal and for purposes of
31 hygiene when, in fact, up to eighty-five per cent of the world's



1 male population is not circumcised and, except in rare cases,
2 hygiene is not an issue for most males; and

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4 WHEREAS, in the United States, the cost of routine
5 circumcisions ranges from \$150,000,000 to \$270,000,000 each
6 year; and

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8 WHEREAS, in certain states, such as Virginia, Medicaid
9 still pays for circumcisions when the cost savings from not
10 covering circumcisions could have paid for much of an infant's
11 needed immunizations; and

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13 WHEREAS, sixteen states--Arizona, California, Florida,
14 Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri,
15 Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah, and
16 Washington already have disallowed Medicaid coverage of
17 circumcision; and

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19 WHEREAS, in recent years, routine circumcision seems to be
20 declining in popularity; in California, only one-third of male
21 newborns are currently undergoing the procedure; and

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23 WHEREAS, newborn circumcision is not recommended by any
24 major American, foreign, or international medical organization,
25 is medically unnecessary and defined as an elective procedure by
26 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, and is not cost-
27 effective; and

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29 WHEREAS, Medicaid is mandated to pay only for medically
30 necessary care and not for elective care and removing
31 circumcision from Medicaid coverage will improve Hawaii's
32 Medicaid program by making the cost savings available to cover
33 other Medicaid needs; now, therefore,

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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
36 Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
37 of 2006, that the Director of Human Services is requested to
38 expedite the adoption of rules in accordance with chapter 91,
39 Hawaii Revised Statutes, and to obtain any federal waivers, if
40 necessary, to disallow Medicaid coverage for routine
41 circumcision for newborn male infants in Hawaii; and

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43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Human Services
44 is requested to calculate the resulting cost savings and



1 formulate a plan to reallocate those cost savings to other
2 Medicaid needs; and

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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director of Human Services
5 is requested to submit its plan to the Legislature not later
6 than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session
7 of 2007; and

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9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
10 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services who,
11 in turn, is requested to distribute copies to all health care
12 providers in Hawaii who perform circumcision procedures
13 reimbursed by Medicaid, the Director of Health, and the
14 President of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation.

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OFFERED BY:

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