

H. Res. 106

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

May 20, 2019.

Whereas female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of women and girls;

Whereas FGM/C comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for nonmedical reasons;

Whereas an estimated 200 million girls and women alive today have been victims of FGM/C, with girls 14 and younger representing 44 million of those who have been cut;

Whereas more than 3 million girls are estimated to be at risk of FGM/C annually;

Whereas the practice is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15;

Whereas the practice is rooted in gender inequality and is often linked to other elements of gender-based violence and discrimination, such as child marriage;

Whereas the World Health Organization asserts that FGM/C has no health benefits for women and girls, and can have long-term impacts on their physical, psychological, sexual, and reproductive health;

Whereas the impacts of FGM/C on the physical health of women and girls can include bleeding, infection, obstetric fistula, complications during childbirth, and death;

Whereas, according to UNICEF, FGM/C is reported to occur in all parts of the world, but is most prevalent in parts of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia;

Whereas, although the practice of FGM/C is highly concentrated in specific regions and associated with several cultural traditions, it is not tied to any one religion;

Whereas, in 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published a report estimating that 513,000 women and girls in the United States were at risk or may have been subjected to FGM/C;

Whereas, in 2015, the United Nations adopted a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 that includes a target to eliminate FGM/C, having previously recognized in 2010 that “the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society”;

Whereas the elimination of FGM/C has been called for by numerous intergovernmental organizations, including the African Union, the European Union, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as well as in 3 resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly;

Whereas the Department of State reports on FGM/C in its Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, including information on whether FGM/C is prevalent, the type and category of genital cutting that is most common, as well as international and governmental efforts being taken to address the practice;

Whereas the Federal Government recognized FGM/C as a form of gender-based violence in the United States Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, released in August 2012 and updated in June 2016, and the United States Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls, released in March 2016;

Whereas a Government Accountability Office report released in 2016 concluded that “State and USAID currently have limited international assistance efforts to address FGM/C.”; and

Whereas, in 2012, the United Nations General Assembly designated February 6 as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation to enhance awareness of and encourage concrete actions by states and individuals against the practice: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) denounces female genital mutilation/cutting as a violation of the human rights of women and girls;

(2) affirms the importance of ending the practice of female genital mutilation/cutting globally for the safety and security of women;

(3) calls upon the international community to increase efforts to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation/cutting; and

(4) urges the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development in their

gender programming to incorporate coordinated efforts to eliminate female genital mutilation/cutting.

Attest:

Clerk.