

Statement on House Bill No. 2217

By Representative Stephanie Clayton

I stand before you today in support of HB 2217. This bill creates the crime of female genital mutilation and with your support sends a strong message that this State values and will protect young women.

Female genital mutilation, while admittedly rare in this state, is practiced by many different cultures across the globe. The process involves brutally removing some or all of the outer female sexual anatomy for the alleged purpose of keeping young women faithful in their future marriage. FGM serves no legitimate medical purpose and should be prohibited.

There currently does not exist any similar crime in our sexual battery statutes- the statutes primarily concern crimes inflicted on minors in order to give sexual pleasure to the perpetrator, whereas this crime does not provide pleasure to the perpetrator but expressly limits the future proper functioning of the victim's body. Please note that HB 2217 does create an exception for those procedures that are medically necessary and no physician can be tried for performing such procedures.

By approving HB 2217 the Kansas Legislature makes clear that depriving any young woman of the essential function of her body is a crime that will not go unpunished. I encourage you to stand with me and the other supporters of this bill to protect and preserve a bright future for young women in Kansas.