**Ohio Senate**

**Judiciary Committee**

**SB214 Female Genital Mutilation Prohibition**

**Testimony of Amy Burkett, MD**

**American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Ohio Section**

Chair Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan and Ranking Member Thomas, my name is Dr. Amy Burkett. I am an obstetrician-gynecologist currently working as a Laborist in Cleveland. I have lived in Ohio my entire life. I received my medical degree from the Northeast Ohio Medical University, affectionately known as NEOMED, and then did my residency at The Ohio State University Medical Center before returning back to Northeast Ohio. I was in private practice for 10 years prior to starting my current position a year ago. I currently serve as both Vice and Legislative Chair for the Ohio Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG, Ohio). As you may know, ACOG is the nationally recognized organization dedicated to the improvement of women’s health. ACOG, Ohio represents over 1500 Ohio OB/GYNs and their patients. I am grateful for this opportunity to provide written proponent testimony for SB214 to prohibit Female Genital Mutilation.

As you have heard in previous testimony, FGM is the ritual cutting and alteration of the female genitalia performed in some African and other cultures for the purpose of ensuring virginity until marriage and eliminating sexual pleasure for women. FGM is predominately forced upon young females and performed by a non-licensed practitioner. Medical complications of FGM include severe bleeding, hemorrhagic shock, nerve damage, severe infection and septicemia (blood infections), potential abscess formation, cysts, excessive growth of scar tissue, urinary tract infections, painful sexual intercourse, increased susceptibility to HIV/AIDS, reproductive tract infection, pelvic inflammatory diseases, infertility, painful menstruation, chronic urinary tract obstruction (bladder stones), urinary incontinence, obstructed labor, and increased risk of bleeding and infection during childbirth. Some victims of FGM victims need subsequent surgeries to allow for childbirth or sexual intercourse.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB214. If you have any questions, or if I can be a resource to you in the future, please do not hesitate to contact me.