

News and Current Events :: Circumcision Ban to Appear on San Francisco Ballot**Circumcision Ban to Appear on San Francisco Ballot - posted by ccchhhrrriiss (), on: 2011/6/20 11:23**

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=13632047>

Circumcision Ban to Appear on San Francisco Ballot
By ROBIN HINDERY The Associated Press
SAN FRANCISCO May 18, 2011 (AP)

A proposal to ban the circumcision of male children in San Francisco has been cleared to appear on the November ballot, setting the stage for the nation's first public vote on what has long been considered a private family matter.

But even in a city with a long-held reputation for pushing boundaries, the measure is drawing heavy fire. Opponents are lining up against it, saying a ban on a religious rite considered sacred by Jews and Muslims is a blatant violation of constitutional rights.

Elections officials confirmed Wednesday the initiative had qualified for the ballot with more than 7,700 valid signatures from city residents. Initiatives must have at least 7,168 names to qualify.

If the measure passes, circumcision would be prohibited among males under the age of 18. The practice would become a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine of up to \$1,000 or up to one year in jail. There would be no religious exemptions.

The proposed ban appears to be the first in the country to make it this far, though a larger national debate over the health benefits of circumcision has been going on for many years. Banning circumcision would almost certainly prompt a flurry of legal challenges alleging violations of the First Amendment's guarantee of the freedom to exercise one's religious beliefs.

Supporters of the ban say male circumcision is a form of genital mutilation that is unnecessary, extremely painful and even dangerous. They say parents should not be able to force the decision on their young child.

"Parents are really guardians, and guardians have to do what's in the best interest of the child. It's his body. It's his choice," said Lloyd Schofield, the measure's lead proponent and a longtime San Francisco resident. He added the cutting away of the foreskin from the penis is a more invasive medical procedure than many new parents or childless individuals realize.

But opponents say such claims are alarmingly misleading, and call the proposal a clear violation of constitutionally protected religious freedoms.

"For a city that's renowned for being progressive and open-minded, to even have to consider such an intolerant proposition ... it sets a dangerous precedent for all cities and states," said Rabbi Gil Yosef Leeds of Berkeley. Leeds is a certified "mohel," the person who traditionally performs ritual circumcisions in the Jewish faith.

He said for the past few months he has been receiving daily phone calls from members of the local Jewish community who are concerned about the proposed ban. But he said he is relatively confident that even if the measure is approved, it will be abruptly—and indefinitely—tied up in litigation.

Jews consider religious male circumcision a commandment from God. It also is widely practiced by Muslims, and while it does not appear in the Quran it is mentioned in the Sunnah, the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Most Christian denominations neither require nor forbid circumcision.

The initiative's backers say its progress is the biggest success story to date in a decades-old, nationwide movement by so-called "intactivists" to end circumcision of male infants in the United States. A similar effort by the Tarrytown, N.Y.-based group Intact America to introduce a circumcision ban in the Massachusetts Legislature last year failed to gain traction.

"It's been kind of under the radar until now, but it was a conversation that needed to happen," Schofield said of the debate over male circumcision. "We've tapped into a spark with our measure — something that's been going on for a long time."

Schofield's group calls its initiative the San Francisco Male Genital Mutilation bill, though he said the city attorney has opted to call the measure "Male Circumcision" on the ballot. The group's official website features a picture of a wide-eyed, delighted-looking baby and urges visitors to help "protect ALL infants and children in San Francisco from the pain and harm caused by forced genital cutting."

Female genital cutting, a controversial practice that usually involves the removal of the clitoris, is illegal in the United States. A circumcision ban would simply extend the same protections to males, Schofield said.

International health organizations have promoted circumcision as an important strategy for reducing the spread of the AIDS virus. That's based on studies that showed it can prevent AIDS among heterosexual men in Africa.

But there hasn't been the same kind of push for circumcision in the U.S., in part because nearly 80 percent of American men are already circumcised, a much higher proportion than the worldwide average of 30 percent. Also, HIV spreads mainly among gay men in the U.S., and research indicates circumcision doesn't protect gay men from HIV.

For years, federal health officials have been working on recommendations regarding circumcision. The effort was sparked by studies that found circumcision is partially effective in preventing the virus' spread between women and men. The recommendations are still being developed, and there is no date set for their release, said a spokeswoman for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC doesn't have a position on the San Francisco proposal, said the spokeswoman, Elizabeth-Ann Chandler.

The chief of pediatric urology at the University of California, San Francisco Benioff Children's Hospital said he remains neutral on the subject of circumcision when parents come to him seeking advice. Dr. Laurence Baskin said he instead tries to educate them about the medical benefits and potential downsides of the procedure.

In addition to the AIDS studies, Baskin cited published research indicating that circumcision can reduce the incidence of other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as penile cancer and urinary tract infections. He disputed claims that circumcision is mutilation or causes significant pain.

"It has what I would say would be a minimal amount of pain if done properly, so my recommendation is to use anesthesia," he said. However, he noted, "most people aren't circumcised and they do just fine."

Baskin was not neutral on the subject of the new ballot measure, calling it "a bunch of nonsense."

"I'm not going to stop doing circumcisions, and this would never pass the First Amendment test," he said. "The people who are doing this should focus on our budget problems, lack of education — something that could really help society."

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=13632047>

Re: Circumcision Ban to Appear on San Francisco Ballot - posted by ccchhrrriiss (), on: 2011/6/20 11:26

By the way, the man who is responsible for pushing this ban is a practicing homosexual. I suspect that he would encourage age circumcision if it was revealed to protect men from AIDS or some other sexually transmitted diseases.

I suspect that any such anti-Semitic legislation like this would fail on appeal.

Anti-circumcision comic hero called anti-Semitic - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2011/6/20 11:26

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Anti-circumcision comic hero called anti-Semitic

By JULIE WATSON

Associated Press

Sat Jun 18, 3:32 pm ET

SAN DIEGO — His fists clenched and muscles rippling beneath a tight blue suit, the yellow-caped character appears poised to take on evil-doers.

But as his name suggests, "Foreskin Man" is not a typical comic-book superhero, and neither is his choice of adversaries: doctors who practice circumcision and Orthodox Jews who support the religious ritual.

San Diego activist Matthew Hess says he conceived the Internet comic series last year as a way to boost his budding national effort to outlaw circumcision, an effort that has led to a measure on San Francisco's ballot in November that would make it illegal to perform a circumcision on a boy under 18.

Recently, though, the series has drawn criticism from those who deride Hess' imagery as anti-Semitic and liken Foreskin Man's confrontation with a sinister-looking Monster Mohel to 1930's Nazi propaganda.

In the comic's second issue, the mohel (a specialist in Jewish ritual circumcision) barges into a San Diego home, snatches a baby boy from his mother, and proceeds to circumcise the infant on a pool table before being stopped by Foreskin Man.

"The (Monster) mohel has a dark complexion, hook nose and is practically drooling at the thought of apparently doing harm to a child," said Nancy Appel, associate director of the Anti-Defamation League. "He even has claws on his fingertips. He is blood thirsty just like the grotesque Jewish stereotypes that appeared in Nazi propaganda. It's absolutely a direct parallel."

Hess is the founder of MGMbill, a national organization pushing to outlaw circumcision on boys under the age of 18. MGM stands for Male Genital Mutilation, and the bill refers to proposed legislation drafted and submitted to state and federal lawmakers to consider passing.

The organization succeeded in getting the measure on San Francisco's ballot that would make it a misdemeanor to circumcise males younger than 18 without "medical need." Hess had hoped to get a similar measure on Santa Monica's ballot but the campaign's leader dropped those plans because of the backlash.

Hess said he launched his campaign in 2003 but had been getting a "lot of glazed eyes" until he created Foreskin Man. He unveiled the comic last year at San Diego's annual Comics Convention, Comic-Con. The first issue, in which Foreskin Man confronts Dr. Mutilator, was viewed as kind of "weird," he said, but the second issue has sent Internet traffic soaring.

"This is generating a lot of attention that is pushing people to look into this a little bit more," Hess told The Associated Press. "The more you look into it, the worse it gets. It is a serious human rights violation. Now a lot of people are going to learn about circumcision and be thinking about it before the November ballot."

Critics agree that it is drawing attention — but, they say, not support. In a June 8 editorial, the San Francisco Chronicle said the comic's "classic anti-Semitic imagery is inexcusable" and shows an "ugly undercurrent to the campaign."

"Foreskin Man" provides yet another reason to vote against the circumcision ban," the newspaper stated.

Hess said the character's blond, Germanic features reflect his own heritage and that the comic is not anti-Semitic because the superhero saves a Jewish baby from genital mutilation.

"I'm not a Nazi," he said.

The medical benefits of circumcision have lately become a heated topic of discussion among parents. Circumcision opponents dismiss the argument that clipping the foreskin serves the cause of hygiene, and say that it amounts to male genital mutilation akin to widely condemned female circumcision rites in Africa.

Last week, actor Russell Crowe lashed out at the practice on Twitter, declaring a newborn baby to be perfect on delivery. The comments vanished from his account within hours, and he later apologized in a tweet, saying: "I realize that some will interpret this debate as me mocking the rituals and traditions of others. I am very sorry."

The measure's opponents say a ban would be a flagrant violation of constitutional rights. For Jews, circumcision is part of a religious covenant, an opportunity for every male to bring a sacrifice to God. The ceremony, held eight days after a son's birth, is generally performed either in a synagogue or at home, and a doctor's scalpel or a knife reserved exclusively for circumcision is used to cut the foreskin, over which a shield is usually placed to ensure the skin above is not cut.

Hess does not want to ban the practice outright but rather allow boys to make the choice for themselves as adults. He said his sexual sensation declined as a result of his circumcision as a baby.

In the next issue, Foreskin Man will take on another battle against circumcision. There will be no Jewish characters in the story, Hess said, though he declined to give details.

Appel fears who will be painted next as a villain. Foreskin Man "has injected something very ugly and toxic into this whole issue and public discussion I think it's being rejected widely and I think it's turning people off, and I really hope he doesn't continue down this path. I don't want to see another group of people hurt by this sort of activity."

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110618/ap_on_re_us/us_foreskin_man?bouchon=807,ca

Re: Circumcision Ban to Appear on San Francisco Ballot - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/6/20 11:35

Dumb, for sure.

So, if it passes will they do some spot checking to see who was and then fine them? Hey, the gov is running out of money and gotta figure out ways to generate some!

Society would be better served if they ban tatoos...but then there is no religion that mandates it so will it be left alone? No, wait, gotta make some money so they better ban it as well.

Actually, it will be interesting to see what kind of vote this proposed ban would generate.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2011/6/20 13:36

Hi Sister Ginnyrose...

Quote:

Dumb, for sure.

So, if it passes will they do some spot checking to see who was and then fine them? Hey, the gov is running out of money and gotta figure out ways to generate some!

So true.

After all, I live in the San Francisco Bay Area. As much as they boast about "civil liberties," it is a real "nanny state" form of local government. It is as if the local government thinks that they know what is better for us than the people do.

Our trash collector has explained to us that the inadvertent presence of recyclable items in the trash container (instead of

f the blue recycle bin) can result in hefty fines. The trash collectors are, by default, the Green Police. If a store in our town is caught giving you your items with a plastic bag -- then they can be fined. If a local restaurant were to give you coffee or soda pop in a Styrofoam cup, they can be fined. If your pet is caught without being spayed or neutered, you can be fined. If you are caught with more grass, trees and plants on your property than is permitted (yes, they actually limit the amount of grass that you can have in your yard), you will be fined.

Our energy use is meticulously documented. Once a month, we are even sent a letter that compares our household energy and water use with the use of our neighbors.

Ironically, the Constitutional rationale that was erroneously applied to the act of abortion dealt with the "right of privacy" (which is not actually worded as such in the Constitution). That concept is often touted as a criticism of the Patriot Act. Yet, it isn't applied to violations of REAL issues of privacy.

We had an issue in which a local man was digging through our garbage and taking some of it with him. These weren't recyclable materials (that he could sell). It was like he was looking for paperwork. I actually recorded him doing this (about a dozen different times).

I called our local police department to ask what type of remedy that we could find. The man is an illegal immigrant, and we were concerned with identity theft.

We were surprised to learn that "dumpster diving" is legal in California. The police officer told me that one of the reasons that it is legal is because trash collectors are not deputies of the state, so they must have legal authority to search through your trash in order to determine whether or not a person is recycling and report them to the local authorities if they aren't -- for the purpose, of course, of dispensing fines.

Quote:

Society would be better served if they ban tattoos...but then there is no religion that mandates it so will it be left alone? No, wait, gotta make some money so they better ban it as well.

You would think, right? Speaking of "harm to the environment:" I was thinking about the other thread about toenail polish. The chemicals found in that stuff is often toxic to both the person, the lungs AND the environment! It comes in tiny doses contained in glass bottles. Yet, you never hear anyone complaining about those things.

Our local city government attempted to ban latex balloons because of the impact that those balloons can have on the environment or sea life. Ironically, those same people calling for a ban on latex balloons are the ones who favor passing out latex condoms to CHILDREN! It is an unbelievable amount of hypocrisy!

Quote:

Actually, it will be interesting to see what kind of vote this proposed ban would generate.

I hope that it will be exposed for what it is -- a violation of the First Amendment protection of religious practice. Moreover, with all of the health benefits that come from male circumcision, I can't think of a reason that this homosexual activist and his supporters would have for this. It does reek of Antisemitism. I suspect that, even if it were passed, it would be rejected upon appeal.

I suppose that it shouldn't be a surprise. After all, the increasingly immoral majority in the San Francisco local government have already legislated out the "circumcision of the heart" (Romans 2:28-29).

Until then, to borrow a cliché from the NRA, "If circumcision is outlawed, only outlaws will be circumcised."

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/6/20 14:27

Chris,

After reading this article, I cannot for the life of me figure out how an intelligent person - like you, with common sense can even begin to tolerate, live with such abuse of power, such flagrant disregard of common sense?!

Quote:
-----After all, I live in the San Francisco Bay Area. As much as they boast about "civil liberties," it is a real "nanny state" form of local government. It is as if the local government thinks that they know what is better for us than the people do.

Welllll, if they are so dreadfully smart then people just won't have to think anymore, just do like Big Brother says and all will happily ever after! No one will have to go to school, learn math or science or spelling lest it challenges the status quo ... Next thing they will tell you is they may fine you for thinking, for challenging them! Opps..sounds like Communism oppression - have the weirdos forgotten that? Fortunately, God is bigger than they - He might even send a terrible earthquake or wildfire that will defy all their green laws...I am serious...

After Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, some MS gov regulations were ignored to allow people time to recover. Just last week our son encounter this mindset...

Chris, maybe you and your wife need to move to the heartland of the USA where common sense is still appreciated - most of the time!

Re: - posted by BeYeDoers (), on: 2011/6/20 14:55

So cutting off some extra skin should be the child's choice, and if you touch him you'll go to prison or pay Big Brother.

But murdering your children should be encouraged by the State, funded by the taxpayer, and "damn you" if you ever even suggest to take away that right of a woman to choose what "health" lifestyle she wants.

God help us.

Re: - posted by istina, on: 2011/6/21 7:00

both news about circumssision and spanking are of the same source-somebody tries to control new generation, they are also the same people who promote abortions and homosexuality and birthcontrol. it is about breaking family institution so somebody can control the society through copped law system.

We must be careful and watch out, soon anything normal will be criminal and vic versa. God, help to stand and save our children when we wouldn't be able to help them.

Re: - posted by JB1968 (), on: 2011/6/21 10:02

sad..... what's next?

Re: - posted by istina, on: 2011/6/21 14:01

we must become wise and strenkthend so we can act as it is told in Daniels prophecy Dan 11^32-33

but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.

Da:11:33: And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.

Da:11:34: Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.

Da:11:35: And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

Da:11:36: And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.