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**To the South African Parliamentary National Assembly
Select Committee on Social Services
Children's Bill [B70B-2003]**

Supporting statement to NOCIRC-SA's submission from
NORM-SA
National Organisation of Restoring Men – South Africa

Emailed to Committee Secretary
Mr. A. Kotze
in Cape Town on 10 October 2005

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NORM-SA, National Organisation of Restoring Men-South Africa, provides moral and technical support for men seeking foreskin restoration, necessitated primarily through being victims of circumcision as minors.

NORM-SA is open to all men regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation or circumcision status. We contend that the forced amputation of any healthy part of an infant or child's genitals in the name of medicine, religion, or social custom violates their human rights. We are now attempting to partially correct this wrong by medically restoring that which was wrongly taken from us, and campaigning to ensure the protection of future generations.

As many members of **NORM-SA** were forcibly circumcised in infancy or childhood we feel that the State is responsible for failing to protect us while we were unable to speak for or defend ourselves. We affirm the criminal and civil recourse granted to children that the bill currently proposes. We would also like to see the State correct its failure to protect us by ensuring the protection of future generations of boys from suffering the same fate.

As children we were unable to voice our objections to halt these ritual genital mutilations that were carried out on us in hospitals and beyond. We are now able as adults to loudly and unreservedly condemn such sexual abuse so that all innocent children are protected from the dangers inherent in our cultural blindness. We stand together to voice our disapproval of the continuation of this medical and social custom and condemn its continued practice. The acts of female and male circumcision have no place in our current constitution.

NORM-SA thus supports **NOCIRC-SA's** proposal to alter the current Children's Bill by removing the gender bias and completely protecting **all** children from **any** form of genital tampering.

Many South African males have been circumcised as infants and minors without consent nor valid medical reason or justification. As adults we realise that our human rights were severely violated, when, without our permission a healthy and functional part of our body, namely the human foreskin, was amputated and discarded without consideration of our basic human right to bodily integrity. We contend that this genital mutilation has affected our physiology and psychology adversely. We thus make firm recommendations to the South African Government that the genital integrity of South African males be protected on equal grounds as the genital integrity of South African females. We strongly recommend that the Children's Act reflect these realities by affording every child born into South Africa the right of genital integrity.

Outdated medical, cultural and religious fears of normal penile anatomy has allowed this abuse to continue. Most circumcised men were surgically altered as children on the misguided information given by the medical profession due to lack of knowledge of the functions of the foreskin. The foreskin is not a birth defect, nor a carrier of disease. It is a natural and important part of the human anatomy. Its removal is unwarranted and the long-term effects of genital mutilations on the psychology of humans have only recently started being studied. No medical association worldwide, including our own (SAMA), recommends the practice of circumcision as a routine.

The South African Government has a responsibility to protect all children from having healthy parts of their body amputated without informed consent nor **VALID** medical reason.

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