

Time is running out for Connecticut legislators to enact a law against female genital mutilation

Over 2,500 women and girls in Connecticut are at risk of or have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED KINGDOM, June 2, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Connecticut legislators have only two days left to vote to enact a law that combats female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) at a state level. After years of advocacy and legislative efforts, particularly by the [CT Coalition to End FGM/C](#), the state legislature is poised to vote on a significantly strengthened bill that addresses both the criminal and civil aspects of FGM/C.



Connecticut State Capital in Hartford, Connecticut

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE IMPACTED BY FGM IN CONNECTICUT?

[Over 2,500 women and girls](#) in Connecticut are at risk of or have undergone FGM/C, but the potential consequences of not passing legislation will have greater reach.

Unless neighboring states explicitly prohibit crossing state lines to perform FGM/C – which involves [damaging, or partially or completely removing, healthy female genitalia](#) for non-medical reasons – it can still be carried out within Connecticut without any penalty enforceable under state law or within its jurisdiction.

In addition, women and girls living in Connecticut can be easily transported to other U.S. states or abroad for the purpose of undergoing FGM/C, in a practice known as “vacation cutting,” which currently has no penalty for the transporter at the state level. If adopted, Senate Bill 1438 would change that.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH FGM LEGISLATION IN CONNECTICUT?

Connecticut remains one of two New England states that have not introduced legislation to ban FGM/C.

Since 2018, Connecticut legislators have made five unsuccessful attempts to pass a law addressing FGM/C. Proposed bills in 2018, 2020, and 2021 aimed at prohibiting FGM/C or studying its prevalence did not progress beyond the committee stage. In 2019, a bill was rejected by the State Senate. In 2024, a drafted bill failed to be introduced.

In 2025, SB 1438 was introduced with simplified language. The initial version of the Bill focused on criminalizing the practice but lacked comprehensive provisions to support survivors and ensure the prevention of FGM/C. Advocates then pushed for civil remedies, among other best practice provisions in favor of survivors, to strengthen the Bill's language.

In May 2025, the Bill was successfully amended and now reflects several best practice provisions, which:

- Prohibit FGM/C in the state
- Allow for survivors to bring civil actions for female genital mutilation
- Delays the statute of limitations for a civil action to 30 years after a survivor turns 18;
- Abrogates parent-child immunity for the purpose of a civil action;

WHY WAS STRENGTHENING THE BILL SO IMPORTANT?

A bill that only criminalizes FGM/C without avenues for civil justice can be limiting to survivors. Survivors may be less likely to come forward, and communities may be less informed about the law or alternatives to harmful traditional practices. Strengthening legislation ensures a more effective, holistic approach that focuses on prevention and healing in addition to punishment.

Across the US, as of 2019, at least 577,000 women and girls were estimated to be at risk of or affected by FGM/C. Updated data from individual states, like Connecticut, is crucial to better understanding the full scope of the issue.

WHAT COULD BE THE IMPACT IF THE BILL PASSES?

If SB 1438 is enacted, Connecticut will finally join the 41 states that have already banned FGM/C in the U.S. The law will provide meaningful protections for women and girls, hold perpetrators accountable, and empower survivors through access to justice and support.

Passing the bill will also send a clear message that FGM/C has no place in Connecticut or the U.S., aligning the state with international human rights standards and reinforcing the importance of bodily autonomy and gender equality.

WHO IS BEHIND THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION?

Bill 1438 was first introduced by Connecticut Democratic Representative Jillian Gilchrest and Republican Representative Nicole Klarides.

The proposed legislation is backed by survivors and others from impacted communities, alongside women's rights advocates and civil society organizations, including the U.S. Network to End FGM/C, Sahiyo, Equality Now, and the Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity. All are members of the CT Coalition to End FGM/C, which has long been calling for state legislation against FGM/C in Connecticut, citing how a law would help those at risk and their families resist cultural and social pressures to continue the practice.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

With the strengthened provisions in place, Bill 1438 now awaits a vote in the Connecticut Senate and a subsequent vote in the House before the legislative session concludes on June 4, 2025.

Advocates are urging lawmakers to act swiftly to pass the legislation, aligning Connecticut with the 41 other states and Washington D.C., which have strengthened protections for women and girls by enacting laws banning FGM/C.

About: Equality Now is an international human rights organisation dedicated to protecting and promoting the rights of all women and girls worldwide. Its work is organised around four main program areas: Achieving Legal Equality, Ending Sexual Violence, Ending Harmful Practices, and Ending Sexual Exploitation, with a cross-cutting focus on the unique challenges facing adolescent girls.

Equality Now combines grassroots activism with legal advocacy at the international, regional, and national levels to achieve systemic change, and collaborates with local partners to ensure governments enact and enforce laws and policies that uphold women's and girls' rights. For more information about Equality Now, visit www.equalitynow.org.

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