



April 28, 2015

Senator Sara Gelser, Chair  
Members of the Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Gelser and Senators,

Children First for Oregon knows that Oregon's kids need strong voices advocating for them. Children First strives to make long-term, systemic change by advocating for policies and programs that keep children healthy and safe, and strengthen families.

Because we are **data-driven**, Children First cannot support the dangerous and discredited practices that falsely claim LGBT youth are mentally ill and need to be cured. There is *no scientific basis* for the practice of "conversion therapy."

Please note these important facts:

- In a systematic review of peer-reviewed journal literature on conversion therapy in 2009, the American Psychological Association Task Force found, "We are concerned that [conversion therapy] may increase the self-stigma, minority stress, and ultimately the distress of children and adolescents. We have serious concerns that the coercive or involuntary treatment of children or adolescents has the potential to be harmful and may potentially violate current clinical and practice guidelines, standards for ethical practice, and human rights."
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Counseling Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the American School Counselor Association, the National Association of School Psychologists and the National Association of Social Workers have all taken the position that sexual orientation is **not** a mental disease and therefore is not something that needs to be "cured."

We ask that you vote to protect these kids by voting "Yes" on House Bill 2307.

Children First for Oregon