

Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly - 2015 Regular Session
STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY
Senate Committee On Human Services and Early Childhood

MEASURE: HB 2307 A
CARRIER: Sen. Gelser

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 04/30/15

Action: Do Pass The A-Eng Bill.

Meeting Dates: 04/28, 04/30

Vote:

Yeas: 3 - Dembrow, Gelser, Monnes Anderson

Nays: 2 - Kruse, Olsen

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Prohibits health providers from practicing conversion therapy if client is under 18 years old. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Conversion therapy experiences
- Data regarding conversion therapy
- Potential for harm
- Parental rights
- Patients' rights and choices
- Religious freedom
- Complexity of aligning self-perceptions, sexuality, identity, and value sets that may not be consistent
- Measure's application to state-licensed professionals only

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Conversion therapies (also called reparative therapies and sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE)) are concerned with changing a person's sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual and are generally based on the view that homosexuality is a mental disorder.

Due to concerns about interventions that mischaracterized homosexuality as a mental disorder, the American Psychological Association (APA) convened a Task Force on Appropriate Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation in 2007, to examine the available body of scientific research. In 2009, the APA concluded that the evidence was neither sufficient to support claims about the efficacy of such therapies, nor was it definitive about the potential for harm, noting that most of the available studies were not methodologically sound. In the absence of sufficient evidence, and given the presence of qualitative research suggesting the potential for psychological harm, the APA cautions mental health professionals not to create expectations, particularly among individuals experiencing distress, that their sexual orientation could be changed. Instead, the APA recommends interventions involving "acceptance, support, and identity exploration and development, without imposing a specific identity outcome."

House Bill 2307-A prohibits the use of conversion therapies by health professionals if the client is under 18.