

Submitter: Brittany Kleinschnitz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

As a Clinical Social Work Associate and queer mental health professional who works closely with the LGBTQ+ and gender nonconforming community, I am writing to strongly support this bill to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy by licensed professionals. As a practitioner who follows the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics, I draw my opinion not only from my personal experiences and values but also from the guidelines of my profession's governing body: "The practice of SOCE [Sexual Orientation Change Efforts] violates the very tenets of the social work profession as outlined in the NASW Code of Ethics. The NASW Code of Ethics (1998) enunciates principles that address ethical decision making in social work practice with lesbians, gay men, bisexual, and transgender people; for example: 1) social workers' commitment to clients' self-determination and competence, and to achieving cultural competence and understanding social diversity, 2) social workers' ethical responsibilities to colleagues, their commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration, and their responsibility to report unethical conduct of colleagues, 3) social workers' ethical responsibilities as professionals—maintaining competence, fighting discrimination, and avoiding misrepresentation, and 4) social workers' ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, to evaluation, and to research. The National Committee on LGBT Issues asserts that conversion therapy or SOCE are an infringement of the guiding principles inherent to social worker ethics and values; a position affirmed by the NASW policy statement on "Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues" (NASW 2014)."

Conversion therapy is not best practice for the LGBTQ+ and gender nonconforming population and continues to perpetuate harm to our communities. The choice to ban Conversion Therapy should lay in the hands of the very community it seeks to serve.

Thank you,  
Brittany Kleinschnitz, CSWA