

Submitter: J. McGrath

Date: February 13th, 2023

On Behalf Of: LGBTIA+ Community

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Care

Measure: HB 2458

As a member of the LGBT+ Community, I am in support of measure HB 2458.

Conversion or Reparative Therapy is an outdated mindset and form of “treatment” that any health professional should never be supported in practicing. It is proven to cause more harm to the individual (subsequently their community at large) than good. The results of such practices have historically resulted in self-harm including suicide. The risk involved is larger than any one health professional or any one individual. This type of treatment is dangerous to an entire community that simply wishes to be accepted and supported as peers and equals in the eyes of human rights and dignity. To show support in this community's protection is to show support for people to live their lives freely as fellow human beings.

Any treatment that aims to rid a human of their non-harmful forms of self expression or love for themselves and others - whether it involves gender or sexual orientation as identities - should be considered an attack and a form of erasure vs a type of medical treatment. Conversion Therapy is a form of hate and is primarily motivated by religious ideals vs medical necessities. Much of the ideologies surrounding this form of treatment come from hateful bias, assumptions, and ignorance; a simple lack of knowledge of the identities and cultures at hand. If health professionals are responsible for the actual welfare of their clients, they should not be permitted to use such tactics.

Please continue to support HB 2458 and continue to protect communities that are constantly fighting to simply exist. We need support from those in power to validate queer existence as well as the knowledge that safe spaces like therapy and counseling sessions are available and actually safe to utilize for actual mental health needs.