

Submitter: Aspen Thomson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

I have served on a suicide prevention and crisis hotline for LGBTQ+ youth, ages ranging from 13 to 24, who reached out from all across the country. I am glad to live in a state where those under 18 are already legally protected from the harms of conversion therapy, but I can tell you from experience that the harms of bigotry on mental health affect adults as well as minors. Anyone who faces discrimination over who they are might be vulnerable to false promises of 'conversion,' but LGBTQ+ identities cannot and should not be erased. The American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Counseling Association all consider conversion therapy ineffective and unethical, and they do not make an exception for adults because it is harmful at any age. It is time to bring Oregon law up to date with the overwhelming consensus of mental health professionals and members of the LGBTQ+ community, who condemn conversion therapy in any form at any time.