

Dear Chair Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to House Bill 1332. I ask that you give this bill a Do Not Pass. As a licensed psychologist in North Dakota, I must urge you to look at the scientific evidence of the harm that conversion therapy has traditionally caused many individuals who willingly or unwillingly were subjected to it. Scientific studies have found conversion therapy to have negative effects associated with it including increased levels of depression, substance use, social thoughts, and suicide attempts. Furthermore, there is no rigorous scientific evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of conversion therapy. In modern psychology and mental health practices, conversion therapy is seen as unethical and harmful. Several major health organizations have made statements against the use of conversion therapy including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Association of Social Workers, and more.

In medical practice, our first duty is to do no harm. Conversion therapy does just that. It causes harm. I strongly encourage you to vote do not pass on this bill. Our community deserves just, scientifically backed care.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Dena Wanner-Perry

Licensed Psychologist, ND and MN