

1411 32<sup>nd</sup> St S, Ste 1  
Fargo, ND, 58103  
701-264-5200 (p)  
701-999-2779 (f)  
info@canopymedicalclinic.com



---

January 20, 2025

### **Do Not Pass HB 1430**

Dear Chair Ruby and members of the Human Services committee,

My name is Kara Gloe. I am a mental health therapist – specifically a clinically licensed Master Social Worker in both North Dakota and Minnesota. I work at Canopy Medical Clinic in Fargo, ND. One of the primary populations I serve include the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in North Dakota. On behalf of my clients and social workers across the state, I urge you to vote Do Not Pass on HB 1430.

#### **Conversion Therapy is Harmful & Not Supported by the Primary Mental Health Professional Associations**

- Clinical research has piled up proving, not only does conversion therapy not work, but it actually causes harm. In a 2019 brief on Conversion Therapy, the UCLA Williams Institute states, "[Efforts to change someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity are associated with poor mental health, including suicidality.](#)"

As such, most major mental health professional associations have made statements specifically opposing the practice. Including:

- [American Psychiatric Association \(APA\)](#)
- [American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy \(AACAP\)](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#)
- [American Medical Association \(AMA\)](#)

\* Please note this list is not exhaustive

#### **It Puts Social Workers at Risk Potentially Exacerbating Our Current Mental Health Crisis**

- The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) provides all social workers in the country with their code of ethics. [NASW began recognizing the harmful effect of conversion therapy in 1992. It passed its first motion to oppose conversion therapy in 2000, which was updated in 2015.](#)
- Any Social Worker who practices conversion therapy would therefore be at risk for ethical violations from the NASW. Further, they would likely be unable to obtain or be supported by any malpractice insurance for their practice of conversion therapy.
- Currently, the mental health needs of North Dakotans out paces our clinicians’ capacity. Unmet need would only worsen with legal battles resulting in loss of licensure.

### **It Is a Government Overreach**

- Both NASW and the North Dakota chapter of NASW are professional membership organizations, made up of trained social workers. Social workers who are the experts on their code of ethics and the expectations of the profession in which they work.
- The positions and policies of such organizations are determined by their elected board members and supported by their membership. Therefore, the North Dakota State Government's attempt to interfere is governmental overreach.

### **It is Unnecessary**

- Proponents of this same bill in the previous legislature argued their goal was to ensure folks who want care that aligns with their values are able to access it. This is already mandated by the [Social Work Code of Ethics, specifically our ethical commitment to our clients](#).
- As a therapist I see many clients who make choices that do not necessarily align with my values. It is not my job to criticize those choices. It is not my job to change a person's behavior based on my values. It is my job to have unconditional positive regard for my client, respect their right to self-determination, and help them work through the barriers that keep them from living their most authentic lives. I do this within my scope of practice and with evidence-based treatment modalities, as required by my Code of Ethics.

I urge you to vote DO NOT PASS on HB 1430 as it opens the door to a harmful psychotherapy practice, puts social workers at risk, represents government overreach, and is unnecessary.

Sincerely,  
Kara Gloe, LCSW  
Canopy Medical Clinic