

Chairman Ruby and the Human Services Committee,

I am writing this in opposition to HB1430 and urge a vote of Do Not Pass.

This bill seeks to legitimize practices that have been widely discredited by the scientific and medical communities as both harmful and unethical. The bill proposes that licensed professionals can offer treatment plans to individuals questioning their sexuality or gender that attempt to align them with heterosexuality or their assigned biological sex. I imagine most licensed professionals wouldn't offer conversion therapy as a legitimate treatment unless motivated by religious beliefs and without regard for the best interests of the client. Conversion therapy is not only scientifically unsupported but is a dangerous form of psychological manipulation that violates the core principles of ethical therapy. Sexual orientation and gender identity are deeply ingrained aspects of an individual's identity, and there is no evidence to suggest that they can be "changed" or "cured" through counseling or treatment. There is plenty of evidence, well documented, to the contrary.

The practice of attempting to alter someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, often referred to as "conversion therapy," has been universally condemned by leading health organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, and the World Health Organization. These condemnations did not happen overnight. These organizations have concluded that such practices can lead to severe mental health consequences, including depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidal ideation, particularly for vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth. The bill's provisions, which allow for such treatments with parental consent, would only further harm individuals by subjecting them to emotionally damaging practices under the guise of care. This bill is rooted in ideological beliefs rather than evidence-based practices and disregards the well-being of individuals. Legalizing these practices is not a step forward—it is a dangerous regression that prioritizes religious doctrine over the health and dignity of LGBTQ+ individuals. Religious doctrine should never be prioritized over the health and dignity of any individual under any circumstances and certainly not by the laws of our state.

I am urging this committee to vote a Do Not Pass on this bill and to reject the notion that lawmakers are more informed about ethical healthcare than the healthcare community.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Christina Feldmann

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