

The Conversion Therapy Ban Bill

House Bill #97 — *An Act relative to abusive practices to change sexual orientation and gender identity in minors*

Sponsored by Representative Kay Khan

Background Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors, and other state-licensed professionals are expected to provide support to their clients, not to violate the Hippocratic maxim, “Do no harm.” When it comes to minors, such professionals should assist their clients with learning to accept themselves for who they are and developing effective coping skills to relieve emotional suffering.



In most therapeutic settings, minors who are struggling with their sexuality or gender identity receive appropriate care. However, a minority of these children and their families are misled to believe that so-called “reparative, healing or conversion therapy” can eliminate same-sex attraction or transgender identity. Such practices, referred to as sexual orientation or gender identity “change efforts,” do not work to change sexual orientation or gender identity. But they do harm: the American Psychological Association identified “negative side effects” including “loss of sexual feeling, depression, suicidality, and anxiety.” Conversion therapy is universally condemned by leading professional organizations.

What the Bill Will Do This bill would ban these practices, erroneously called “therapy,” that purport to change a minor’s same-sex attraction or transgender identity. Specifically it would:

✓ Prohibit any licensed medical, mental health, or human service professional as defined in Chapter 112 from engaging with a minor in therapeutic practices aimed at changing or healing the minor’s sexual orientation, in particular same-sex attraction.



✓ Charge state mandatory reporters to report cases of suspected instances where a minor is being subjected to reparative or conversion therapy by a state licensed professional.



✓ Prohibit any licensed medical, mental health, or human service professional as defined in Chapter 112 from engaging in therapeutic practices aimed at eliminating a minor’s sincerely held conviction that their birth-assigned gender is different or inappropriate from their actual gender identity, and related practices aimed to discourage that minor from seeking a transition to the gender they identify as.



✓ Define advertisements of such reparative therapy or conversion therapy as deceptive acts or practices in violation of state consumer protections laws, and subject to rules and regulations by the state Attorney General.



For more information, please contact Emily Szargowicz in the office of Representative Kay Khan at 617-722-2011.

The Conversion Therapy Ban Bill Coalition



NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS



Massachusetts
Transgender
Political
Coalition



On the Record as Condemning Conversion Therapy...

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physician Assistants
American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
American Association of School Administrators
American Counseling Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychoanalytic Association
American Psychological Association

American School Counselor Association
American School Health Association
Child Welfare League of America
The Interfaith Alliance
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of Social Workers
National Education Association
Pan American Health Organization