

Honorable Members of the Committee:

I urge you to support and bring S.132 (ban damaging conversion therapy) up for a vote in committee.

Conversion therapy refers to the practice to change and help "cure" someone's sexual orientation. Sadly, this practice is used on minors, who have no legal authority to make their own medical decisions. These practices lead to depression, decreased self-esteem, substance abuse, suicidal behavior, and frequently result in suicide. That is why physiological, medical, and counseling associations are against this practice.

The associations also agree that this practice is ineffective, as well as extremely harmful, and damaging to individuals that go through these programs. A few of these organizations include: The American Medical Association, American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, National Association of Social Workers, and the World Health Organization.

Without question, there is very clear evidence that conversion therapy does not work and only traumatizes patients more. Several states have passed laws banning licensed therapists from subjecting minors to such treatment, and I urge you to join the movement. Please pass this legislation that prohibits state-licensed mental healthcare providers from advertising or providing "conversion therapy" or "pray away the gay" therapy to anyone under the age of eighteen.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Caleb Laieski
National Advocate for the LGBT Community, Public Safety, and the Environment