

Submitter: Elliot Townley

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2458

Today I want to add my voice in support of prohibiting conversion therapy in Oregon. As a mental health provider who is also transgender and bisexual, I have both personal and professional knowledge regarding the massive trauma and harm caused by this alleged "therapy." Outcome studies on conversion therapy demonstrate that these practices cause damage to their clients, and the vast majority of mental health professionals recognize that this practice is unethical and harmful. The principle of nonmaleficence, in the face of established research documenting the harm of conversion therapy practices, should indicate that no behavioral health or medical provider should engage in these practices. Oregon legislature ought to recognize and uphold this professional standard, to protect Oregonians from harm marketed as therapy.

While LGBTQIA+ people are being used as political targets, Oregon has a responsibility to come out clearly in recognition that we are human beings, and should not be abused into abandoning our identities. People all around the country are afraid of their doctors and therapists because of anti-LGBTQ legislation forcing its way into people's healthcare. Oregon needs to establish the legal expectation that LGBTQ Oregonians are citizens deserving of protection and competent care, and hold professionals accountable who would use dangerous practices against us.