Connective Therapy Collective

Submitter: Keely C. Helmick, LPC
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB2458

My name is Keely C. Helmick and I support House Bill 2458. This critical piece of legislature will work to protect all Oregonians from the dangerous effects of Conversion Therapy.

As an Oregon Licensed Professional Counselor and Oregon Board certified Supervisor, I have over 16 years of first hand experience working in the mental health field and serving the populations that would most directly be affected by this legislation. I've seen individuals that have been traumatized by therapists who have thrived while this critical legislation hasn't existed. I've seen couples who have found me after they have been misled by therapists who are practicing Conversion Therapy. We have too many stories of the harm done by this legislature that has gone unpassed.

Research published by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) finds that individuals exposed to conversion therapy had 2–2.5 times the odds of reporting increased psychosocial conditions like depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation and/or attempts and other mental health conditions. I've witnessed these effects in my clients and often find myself providing services for couples and individuals who are trying to heal from the negative effects that Conversion Therapy has created in their lives.

HB2458 would create necessary regulations for licensed mental health providers that are absolutely aligned with the state and national ethical codes we must follow! The American Psychological Association has already stated that Conversion Therapy is not therapy and therefore should not be performed by state licensed and regulated mental health providers. It's time to continue with our progress as a state and put the safety and care of our constituents first.

A vote for House Bill 2458 will save lives and make the mental health field safer for both clients and clinicians. It's time to make the right decision.

Sincerely,

Keely C. Helmick, Licensed Professional Counselor