

I am a licensed psychologist in Oregon who works with the LGBTQ+ and gender nonconforming community, and I am in full support of HB2458 to ban the practice of conversion therapy by licensed healthcare professionals. As a psychologist, I am bound by the American Psychological Association's (APA) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the first principle of which states that "Psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm." The practice of sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE) violates this principle. In fact, the APA Resolution on Sexual Orientation Change Efforts has resolved that "scientific evidence and clinical experience indicate that SOCE put individuals at significant risk of harm," and "encourages individuals, families, health professionals, and organizations to avoid SOCE" (2021). Due to systemic oppression and religious intolerance, the LGBTQ+ community already experiences increased rates of mental health difficulties, including increased risk for suicide and substance abuse. Therefore, I am in support of the prohibition of conversion therapy, in order to preserve the safety and well-being of already vulnerable populations. Thank you.

References

American Psychological Association (2021). APA Resolution on Sexual Orientation Change Efforts. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-sexual-orientation-change-efforts.pdf>