

NOT IN FAVOUR OF HB2458

I have a lot of thoughts on this, but I will attempt to be brief and to the point.

I am NOT in favour of the edits to this bill because:

~It Conflates Sex and Gender

Sex is rooted in biology. It cannot be changed—make up, clothing, and surgeries DO NOT and CANNOT change one's sex. This is why the so called 'conversion therapy' was so heinous. As a lesbian, (a woman), I am not attracted to men. This will not change. It is not just a 'feeling'. I'm wired this way. Conversely, a heterosexual man is innately wired towards being attracted to women. He is not going to partner with a man who *identifies* as a woman because heterosexual men are not attracted to other men. Further, to said heterosexual man to endure a so called 'therapy' purely designed to **make** him change his very nature, would be nothing but criminal and akin to torture. Thus, having a bill that stops the practice of putting LGB people through such 'therapies' was and is necessary.

Gender, on the other hand, is NOT innate. Gender/Gender Identity is rooted in self image. Because it is based upon how a given person thinks about themselves (additionally, there are people who don't even *have* 'gender identities' because they don't think about it, know about it, or understand what it means), 'gender identity' is a very *changeable* thing. The concept of a 'gender identity' differs from person to person. It is heavily influenced by culture—religion; race; class; state or region, just to name a few. There are multiple conceptions of 'gender identity'. 'Gender identity' is fluid.

Because these two things, (sex / the physical and gender / the mental and cultural) are so vastly different, one bill cannot effectively address both items.

~It Constrains Therapists from Being Able to Truly Help People

This bill seems to be saying that if a person is questioning their 'gender identity', the only correct form of treatment is to affirm whatever the person in therapy is currently feeling. This is ridiculous. Proper therapy requires that a given individual interrogate themselves and their circumstances in order to emerge with a clearer sense of self. Questions such as, "What is triggering me?" "How could I have reacted differently?" "What am I getting out of this relationship?" "Why is [fill in the blank] important to me?", and the like. These are questions that help us grow. It is NOT a form of conversion therapy.

Where 'gender identity' is concerned, the outside influences I mentioned previously can develop into a condition called Gender Dysphoria for some people. For example: girls who want to be mechanics or boys who want to be makeup artists may think there is something wrong with them; or that they have been 'born into the wrong body' *because societal pressures* are causing them to 'feel wrong' about the things that are important to them. When people are struggling with their feelings, therapists are supposed enable them to question. To give mindful examination to their deepest inner selves. I cannot support a bill that actively creates an environment where people who have studied, been tested by the State and licensed, are prohibited from properly performing the duties their profession requires of them. This creates a situation where instead of healing, there will most definitely be harm. And because we are talking about people's mental

health, this kind of harm echoes passed the person, through their home life and out into the greater communities around them. Why would ya'll intentionally create something that could do so much damage, at a time where, especially post-covid lockdowns, all of our mental states are probably a bit more wobbly than we're willing to admit—even to ourselves?

~This Bill is Especially Harmful to Children

This bill is a sly way to legitimize NOT helping children with Gender Dysphoria. By only allowing the “affirmative care model” to be offered to those under 18, you are creating a situation where troubled youth will be given no boundaries; no speedbumps that say, “let's think about this a moment”. Instead, this model of care continuously nudges a troubled youngster towards thoughtless re-socialization, possible medicalization and a young body irrevocably altered by surgery. All of this for a *feeling*. For an *imagined* self. Feelings can change. Double mastectomies and castrations are Forever.

~Not an Emergency

Upon what is this sense of emergency based? Why so much of a rush to enshrine “gender identity”? I am a 55 year old taxpayer. When I hear my government talking about ‘emergencies’ and urging everyone to move quickly, I always wonder how money is involved—who's getting it, and who's not getting it? And I also wonder W-H-Y? I am NOT convinced we need to rush towards opening a door even more widely to an issue that has barely even been studied.

PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS BILL