

To the Justice Committee.

I am writing in response to the purposed amendments to Bill C-6. It is clear that this Bill is ineffective and will do nothing but increase discrimination against Canadians regardless of gender orientation. To criminalize parents, churches, counselors and other fellow Canadians for helping consenting individuals with Conversion Therapy is not what we do in a free country. The Bill states that "Bill C-6 would amend the *Criminal Code* to prohibit certain activities that relate to "conversion therapy", which is defined as practices, treatment or services designed to change an individual's sexual orientation to heterosexual."

The main issue with this definition is that it is one sided and criminalizes heterosexuals trying to help consenting LGBTQ2 Canadians. But non-heterosexual individuals remain free to convert adults and even children without parental consent, (as we see in the current public school system). The objective of the amendment gives more freedom of speech LGBTQ2 individuals by restricting the freedom of heterosexuals, which are the majority of society.

I respect that special interest groups and minorities deserve equal rights but I reject the idea that we need to elevate them above the rest of society by stripping the vast majority of society of their freedom of speech. The lie that speech is violence is just another way that this amendment restricts the way we can speak to and about LGBTQ2 people.

If the new version of this Bill passes, then many who were able to seek conversion therapy will now have no options as everyone will be afraid of being charged for helping them. I find this extremely disrespectful to both sides of the gender spectrum. I realise that favoring special interest groups is "the flavor of the day" but restricting how we speak about them and with them will just continue to fragment and divide our society.

This restricts the freedom of religion. Section 2(a) provides that everyone has freedom of conscience and religion. This guarantee protects a person's sincerely held practices or beliefs that have a connection with religion. A law or government action that interferes with the ability to act in accordance with such practices or beliefs is discriminatory and unfair to individuals of faith and who believe in a code of ethics and morals that may be contrary to what the LGBTQ2 community believes. A difference of belief is what makes Canada such a diverse and unique society and is not a bad thing at all.

Restricting what we say about each other goes against Section 2(b) which states that freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication is a fundamental right of Canadian society.

Speech is speech nothing more and nothing less. If conversion therapy is done under consent the one being counselled is subject to nothing more than words. It is not violence nor discriminatory if the person doesn't want to get conversion therapy they are free to refuse.

I urge you to listen to the voice of the Canadian people and fix the definition to allow parents to speak to their children about gender and sexuality and to allow forms of counselling and therapy to continue to be available to consenting individuals.

Thank you for your time.