

November 26, 2020

Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Committee members:

We are writing to you again about the Conversion Therapy legislation, Bill C-8. (*Previous letter sent October 1, 2020.*)

We write as long time allies to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and trans people. We have marched in solidarity for gay rights since the late 1970s. As professional visual artists we have created visual art in support of same-sex attraction at various times in our careers. We have spoken out publicly against homophobic behaviour and supported openly gay and lesbian political candidates at all levels of government. There are gay, lesbian and trans people among our extended family whom we support 100%.

We are neither “right wing” nor “fundamentalists”.

In 1984 we were part of a support committee for the “Still Sane” exhibition at Vancouver Women in Focus Gallery; Claire designed the typography and poster. Persimmon Blackbridge created a series of sculptures with Sheila Gilhooly (also with the participation of Nym Hughes, Nora D. Randall, NiHera, and Dee dee) that documented Gilhooly’s experience of being institutionalized, given shock & psychiatric drugs for being a lesbian. A powerful depiction of a woman who endured the worst kind of conversion therapy, yet survived due to her own determination, ingenuity and courage, as well the support of other lesbians.

We remain strongly opposed to this and other forms of conversion therapy of gays, lesbians and bisexuals. However, we continue to have serious concerns about the promotion of “affirmation” of so-called gender identity, particularly for children. The conflation of homosexuality with “gender identity” will cause this legislation to have the opposite effect to its stated intent.

If you are following detransitioner Keira Bell’s legal action against Britain’s Tavistock clinic and Portman NHS trust (<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-51676020>), you will realize that the legislation, if passed as drafted, may result in many more such lawsuits against Canadian health authorities, hospitals, clinics and doctors.

The long term effects of puberty blockers, hormones and surgery are as yet unknown. No child is ever “born in the wrong body.” The medicalization of young people has become a new, industrialized form of conversion therapy that is “transing the gay away” - high tech, high profit, post-modern homophobia.

We urge you to study the brief from Detrans Canada (<https://detranscanada.com/brief-on-bill-c-6/>), to listen to the remarks of trans people such as Scott Newgent, and the voices of detransitioners (<https://www.transgendertrend.com/detransition/>) before finalizing this legislation.

Sincerely,

 C. Kujundzic

Bill Horne and Claire Kujundzic

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caWsbar and the LGB Alliance Canada