

I ask that the committee please reconsider the proposed Bill C-6 regarding so-called conversion therapy. I believe that the bill is poorly worded, and imposing such a blanket ban on poorly-defined therapies is an infringement on the right of Canadians to free speech and practice of religious beliefs.

Although I strongly support the banning of coercive or degrading practices aimed at changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, this bill goes far beyond that. It leaves parents, counsellors, teachers, and religious ministers at risk of being criminalized for affirming a person's biological identity.

I am deeply concerned that unless "conversion therapy" is more clearly defined, this bill will ban such practices such as Bible teaching, friends praying for one another, voluntary support groups, pastoral counselling using scripture, professional counsellors and parents affirming the biology of their children. These practices, which have historically offered comfort, help, and guidance to millions of people, will suddenly become illegal.

While banning so-called conversion therapy, it actually leaves cisgender children at risk of "conversion therapy" to transgender ideologies. Who is converting who? If the idea of gender fluidity may be introduced to children at a young age, and children encouraged to explore transgender identity, yet parents are not allowed to affirm a child who has become confused by such teachings in schools and media, in their biological sex, this is tantamount to child abuse.

I am concerned that under this Bill, parents could risk becoming charged with family violence. This is already happening in Australia, where *The Australian* newspaper recently reported that a transgender teenager has been removed from their parents' custody over their apparent refusal to consent to a gender transition. I do not believe that this is the kind of society that most Canadians want. Parents must be allowed to have open conversations with their own children about sexuality and gender. Families must be allowed to set rules about sex and relationships.

No law should discriminate against Canadians by limiting what services they can receive. There are many LGBT people who want to embrace their faith and live according to its standards. This Bill would deny them the services they desire, forbidding them from voluntarily seeking pastoral or spiritual support to overcome unwanted same-sex attraction. This is discriminatory.

While Bill C-6 expressly allows counselling, medical, and surgical efforts to change a child's gender, it expressly prohibits support for a child seeking to de-transition to their birth gender. This is tantamount to child abuse. Transgender regret is a growing phenomenon, showing that gender transition does not always provide the resolution the person is looking for. Canadian law should recognize this, allowing LGBTQ2 people to voluntarily seek the professional and religious counselling services they choose.

These are very serious issues that could fundamentally change the nature of our free and affirming society, so I ask you to seriously consider them. Thank you.