
Janice Sullivan

December 4, 2020

Attn: The Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights of Canada

Dear Mr. Arif Virani, Mr. Mike Kelloway, Mr. James Maloney, Mr. Sameer Zuberi, Mr. Sangha, and Mr. Iqra Khalid.,

I am a parent of 3 daughters, a professional working in health care and a concerned citizen of Canada who has been moved to submit the following brief.

I am calling on the federal government to fix the definition of conversion therapy contained in Bill C-6 so that the specific wording in Bill C-6 will:

- Ban coercive, degrading practices that are designed to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Ensure that no laws discriminate against Canadians by limiting what services they can receive based on their sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Allow parents to speak with their own children about sexuality and gender, and set house rules about sex and relationships;
- Allow free and open conversations about sexuality and sexual behaviour; and
- Not criminalize professional and religious counseling voluntarily requested and consented to by LGBTQ2 Canadians.

The current wording of Bill C-6 applies the label "conversion therapy" to a broad range of practices and even private conversations. This is going far beyond what most people think of when they hear this term and thus is extremely dangerous and also a violation of our autonomy as Canadian citizens.

The definition in Bill C-6 says that conversion therapy is "a practice, treatment or service designed to change a person's sexual orientation to

heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender, or to repress or reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour.”

The definition does not just apply to efforts to change a person’s sexual orientation – it could also ban many different kinds of advice and counsel from parents, teachers, and guidance counselors encouraging children to reduce their sexual behaviour. (E.g., A counselor encourages a young person to reduce his or her number of sexual partners).

Bill C-6 could open the door for law enforcement to tap into private family communications to investigate discussion that might fit the bill’s broad definition of “conversion therapy”.

Further, while Bill C-6 expressly allows counselling, medical, and surgical efforts to change a child’s gender, it expressly prohibits any support for a child seeking to de-transition to their birth (cis) gender.

If passed, Bill C-6 could restrict the choices of LGBTQ2 Canadians concerning sexuality and gender by prohibiting access to any professional or spiritual support freely chosen to limit sexual behaviour or de-transition.

This is an important issue and I respectfully but strongly insist that my voice and the voice of other concerned citizens be heard.

For more information, please consider FixTheDefinition.ca

Sincerely,

Janice Sullivan Anderson