

Dear Member of the Bill C6 Committee:

As Christian, it is my desire to share the good news of the Gospel throughout Canada and to walk alongside all individuals in their spiritual journey, in a respectful and loving manner. I have always welcomed, loved, and cared for all individuals, including members of the LGBTQ2 community. I also personally oppose any form of coercive, manipulative, or degrading practices of any kind.

Where I do agree and support the intent of the Government to end forced, abusive and harmful practices designed to change a person's sexual orientation or gender, I don't necessarily agree with the methods and tactics being used to bring about the changes needed.

One of my major concerns with Bill C-6 is the current definition of conversion therapy as, "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 behavior" (Section 320.101). When you have such a broad definition for conversion therapy, it could very easily restrict or harm many legitimate and beneficial activities that support individuals and could also violate other rights which are protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

If the current definition of conversion therapy in Bill C-6 was accepted, it would make the following activities unlawful and subject to criminal prosecution and penalties:

- Conversations between children and their parents, family members, or faith leaders on sexual orientation and gender identity, during which the former would legitimately share their values and beliefs regarding sexuality.
- Pastoral counseling or other faith-based activities aimed at helping teenagers who are willingly seeking guidance in pursuing chastity or overcoming destructive sexual behaviors.
- Pastoral counseling or other religious counseling services offered to an adult person who requests spiritual direction in understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Public presentations of Biblical teachings and doctrines related to human sexuality and same-sex attraction (including those that express traditional religious beliefs about marriage, sexuality, and gender)

Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees and protects, as fundamental freedoms, the freedom of conscience and religion as well as freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression. I am concerned that Bill C-6 doesn't take into account differing thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and expressions on human sexuality, including those that arise from religious beliefs.

I'm equally concerned that Bill C-6 seems to be creating a double standard by criminalizing practices "designed to change a person's sexual orientation to heterosexual or gender identity to cisgender" but not the exact same practices when they are designed to lead a heterosexual person, especially young people, into changing their sexual orientation or gender identity. By creating a double standard, it sends the wrong message that it's good for one but not for the other.

Here are my recommendations on what needs to be amended to Bill C-6:

- 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
- Not criminalize professional and religious counseling voluntarily requested and consented to by LGBTQ2 Canadians.

Thank you for your consideration a!