

Dear Justice Committee of Canada,

We believe that the current definition of Conversion Therapy stated in Bill C-6 lacks critical specificities; and that this definition may cause a greater negative impact on the very Canadians it rightly seeks to protect. According to The Charter of Rights and Freedoms, it is fundamental that all Canadians have: “*freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication;*”^[1]. The definition of conversion therapy in Bill C-6 as it stands will limit free speech and criminalize the expression of opinions that are openly sought by parents, children, and LGBTQ2 Canadians. Parents should have the legal right to have open conversations with their own children and set personalized rules concerning sexual activity while they live at home. We agree that child abuse is horrific; and that coercive, degrading “conversion therapy” practices are abusive. However, there are already provisions in the Criminal Code of Canada to protect children who are in abusive homes.

One of the main goals of Bill C-6 is to protect the rights of LGBTQ2 Canadians. Bill C-6 as it stands will limit the ability of LGBTQ2 Canadians to freely seek alternative counsel and/or advice. The criminalization of advertising counselling to help LGBTQ2 Canadians who wish to de-transition will further limit and repress their choices. Criminalizing freedom of choice does not necessarily constitute protection.

Bill C-6 should:

- 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.

Please fix the definition so that the rights and freedoms of all Canadians will be protected. Keep homes a safe place for parents and children to discuss and understand differing views about sexuality.

Sincerely;

Griffin & Cassy Victor

^[1] *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*