



Legislation Text

File #: RES. 2019-R028, **Version:** 1

To support the prohibition of conversion therapy practices in the city of Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

WHEREAS, contemporary science recognizes that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender is part of the natural spectrum of human identity and is not a disease, disorder, or illness; and

WHEREAS, “conversion therapy” means any practices or treatments that seek to change an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same gender; and

WHEREAS, conversion therapy has been rejected by several prominent medical and mental health organizations, including the American Psychological Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, American Counseling Association Governing Council, American Psychoanalytic Association, American School Counselor Association, National Association of Social Workers, and the Pan American Health Organization; and

WHEREAS, at its 87th annual meeting, the United States Conference of Mayors unanimously passed a resolution in support of the complete ban of conversion therapy in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Williams Institute at the UCLA School of Law estimates that 698,000 lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender adults in the United States have been subject to conversion therapy practices to change their sexual orientation or gender identity at some point in their lives, including approximately 350,000 who were adolescents; and

WHEREAS, a poll conducted by Gravis Marketing in Virginia showed that 71 percent of the individuals polled believed that the use of conversion therapy on youth should be illegal; and

WHEREAS, conversion therapy leads to critical health risks including anxiety, depression, decreased self-esteem, substance abuse, homelessness, and suicide; and

WHEREAS, minors are especially vulnerable to the harms associated with conversion therapy; and
WHEREAS, the City has a compelling interest in protecting the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, and in protecting its minors against exposure to serious harms caused by conversion therapy;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That the City supports the prohibition of conversion therapy practices in the city of Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.