

**ITEM #29**

**ADDITIONAL MATERIAL  
10:00 A.M. REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 14, 2017**

**SUBMITTED AT THE REQUEST OF  
COMMISSIONER NAN RICH**



OFFICE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS  
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 426 • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-357-7575 • FAX 954-357-6573

October 17, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Commissioners  
Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Edward G. Labrador, Esq.  
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "E. Labrador", written over a horizontal line.

**RE:** Human Rights Board Recommendation

Attached is a memorandum from Michael Rajner, Vice Chair of the Human Rights Board (HRB), concerning the HRB's recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners the enactment of an ordinance to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy relating to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression by licensed mental health professionals on minors, similar to ordinances in the cities of Oakland Park and Wilton Manors.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact our office.

EGL/bam

Attachment

**C:** Bertha Henry, County Administrator  
Andrew Meyers, County Attorney  
Robert Melton, County Auditor  
Human Rights Board



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October 17, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Commissioners  
Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** Michael Emanuel Rajner, Vice Chair  
Human Rights Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MER", is written over the name "Michael Emanuel Rajner" in the "FROM" field.

**SUBJECT:** Human Rights Board Recommendation to Enact an Ordinance to Prohibit the Practice of Conversion Therapy Relating to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression

At the Human Rights Board (HRB) meeting of October 16, 2017, members voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners the enactment of an ordinance to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy relating to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression by licensed mental health professionals on minors, similar to ordinances in the cities of Oakland Park and Wilton Manors.

MER/bam

**C:** Bertha Henry, County Administrator  
Andrew Meyers, County Attorney  
Robert Melton, County Auditor Edward G. Labrador, Esq., Director, OIAPS  
Human Rights Board

Attachments

Dear esteemed members of the Broward County Human Rights Board,

On behalf of Equality Florida, the state's largest civil rights organization dedicated to ending discrimination against the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, thank you for spearheading this important discussion to ban conversion therapy in Broward County. Conversion therapy is fraudulent, dangerous, and inflicts immeasurable harm on its victims and we applaud you and your colleagues for taking up this important issue.

So-called "reparative therapy" is a debunked practice that purports to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Also known as "ex-gay therapy" and sexual orientation change efforts, such practices have been debunked by every mainstream medical and mental health organization - including the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Not only is it ineffective in actually changing a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, it puts LGBTQ youth and their families at risk. And yet, because deep-seated homophobia and transphobia still exist in our society, the practice of conversion therapy continues without any legal consequence.

Conversion therapy can be extremely dangerous and, in some cases, fatal. Minors are especially vulnerable to the dangers of conversion therapy, which has been tragically proven to lead to depression, anxiety, drug use, homelessness, self-harm and suicide. Research shows that lesbian, gay, and bisexual young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection during adolescence were more than eight times more likely to report having attempted suicide, more than five times more likely to report high levels of depression, and more than three times more likely to use illegal drugs compared with their peers.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the two most important factors contributing to the wellbeing of an LGBTQ young person are family acceptance and a supportive school environment. While we can't always ensure that LGBTQ youth are accepted and affirmed by their families, we can and we must protect them from being subjected to dishonest and dangerous abuse disguised as medical treatment. LGBTQ youth are born perfect, and all of them deserve to grow up knowing they are celebrated and valued for exactly who they are.

Thank you for seeking to protect LGBTQ young people from harm. Please let us know if we can be helpful in providing research, talking points, or legal analysis. We look forward to working with you to ban the practice of conversion therapy in Broward County.

In Equality,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Hannah Willard".

Hannah Willard  
Public Policy Director  
Equality Florida

**The Pride Center at Equality Park's  
Official Statement Against Conversion Therapy**

The Pride Center at Equality Park condemns and rejects the use of any practice that attempts to change an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. We agree with all of the nation's leading professional medical and mental health associations; each has rejected so-called "conversion therapy" as ineffective, unnecessary and dangerous. The fraudulent, discredited practices of "conversion therapy" falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. Let us be clear: being LGBTQ+ is not an illness, disorder, shortcoming or disease. So-called "conversion therapy" is dangerous and unscientific. Tragically, these false practices lead to mental illness, homelessness, self-harm, drug use and suicide, especially in teenagers. We at The Pride Center believe that all individuals have the right to be who they are, and we cherish the unique beauty of all sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions. As a community, we stand together to end these abusive practices.

**Connect  
with Your  
Community**