

Vote Yes on HB 5569 (Representative Kelly Cassidy) The Youth Mental Health Protection Act

To ban the practice of conversion therapy for minors under 18

The Youth Mental Health Protection Act bans the practice of conversion therapy for minors under the age of 18.

BACKGROUND

NASW has a longstanding policy of opposing therapeutic attempts to change the sexual orientation of individuals. Such efforts are not considered therapy or good social work practice, and they can engender malpractice liabilities for those social workers who engage in it. In an official policy statement by NASW, homosexuality is not recognized as a mental disorder and is thus not something that needs to be nor can be cured.

- The NASW Illinois Chapter opposes reparative therapies and treatments designed to change the sexual orientation of individuals, and it is against referring clients to practitioners or programs that claim to do so.
- NASW official policy states that homosexuality is not recognized as a mental disorder and is thus not something that needs to be or can be cured.
- The practice of conversion therapy is already banned from licensed social workers in Illinois, regardless of the age of the client, due to the fact it violates the NASW *Code of Ethics* which is included in the Illinois social work licensure law.
- No credible data demonstrates that reparative or conversion therapies are effective; in fact they show such therapies can be harmful to children, potentially resulting in increased depression, anxiety, and self-destructive behavior.
- Reparative therapy treatments can potentially lead to severe emotional damage and be harmful to the mental health, safety and well-being of the minor.
- The NASW opposes these types of therapies in conjunction with other major mental health advocates and health organizations including the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Medical Association.

For more information, contact office@naswil.org or call (312) 435-2100.