

Introduced by _____

First Reading _____

Second Reading _____

Ordinance No. _____

Council Bill No. B 295-19

AN ORDINANCE

amending Chapter 16 of the City Code to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy on juveniles; and fixing the time when this ordinance shall become effective.

WHEREAS, conversion therapy, also known as reparative therapy, ex-gay therapy, or sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts, is a range of discredited practices aimed at changing one’s sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, a national community of professionals in education, social work, health, mental health and counseling, including the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), have determined that there is no scientifically valid evidence that supports the practice of conversion therapy; and

WHEREAS, such professionals have determined that there is no evidence that conversion therapy is effective or that an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity can be changed by conversion therapy; and

WHEREAS, such professionals have also determined that conversion therapy is not only ineffective, but is substantially dangerous to an individual’s mental and physical well-being and has also been shown to contribute to depression, self-harm, low self-esteem, family rejection and suicide; and

WHEREAS, fifteen states, including Washington, DC, have enacted laws or regulations to ban conversion therapy against minors by licensed medical providers, and many bills have been filed in similar states, including Missouri’s Youth Mental Health Preservation Act; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Columbia has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all people in our community, especially the physical and psychological well-being of minors, including LGBTQ youth; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has declared its’ desire to ensure Columbia is a city that is open and affirming to all, including LGBTQ individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, as a city that strives to respect and celebrate its diversity, the City Council affirms that being LGBTQ is not a disorder, disease, illness, deficiency or shortcoming.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 16 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, Missouri, is hereby amended by adding the following section:

Sec. 16-146. Conversion therapy of minors prohibited.

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meaning indicated in this subsection:

Conversion therapy or reparative therapy means any practice or treatment that seeks 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. Conversion therapy shall not include counseling that provides support and assistance to a person undergoing gender transition, or counseling that provides acceptance, support and understanding of a person or facilitates a person's coping, social support, and development, including sexual orientation-neutral treatment interventions to prevent or address unlawful conduct or unsafe sexual practices, as long as such counseling does not seek to change sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gender identity or expression means the gender-related identity, appearance, expression, behavior or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of an individual, with or without regard to the individual's designated sex at birth.

Minor means any person under eighteen (18) years of age.

Provider means any licensed medical or mental health professional including, but not limited to, licensed professional counselors, licensed psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, provisional licensed professional counselors, provisional and temporary licensed psychologists, licensed and provisional licensed marital and family therapists, psychiatrists, certified substance abuse counselors, certified school counselors, behavior analysts and any professional licensed under Chapters 334 and 337 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri.

Sexual orientation means the preference or practice of homosexuality, heterosexuality, asexuality, and bisexuality, or some combination thereof, by consenting adults, or as perceived by others, but not including sexual preference or practice between an adult and a minor.

(b) *Prohibited practice.* It shall be unlawful for any provider to provide conversion therapy or reparative therapy to a minor, regardless of whether the provider receives compensation in exchange for such services.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage.

PASSED this _____ day of _____, 2019.

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor and Presiding Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Counselor