

TESTIMONY OF SHELLEY GREGORY, MILWAUKEE LGBT COMMUNITY
PUBLIC SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE
COMMON COUNCIL
MARCH 8, 2018
CENTER

Chair Donovan, Council Members, and Staff:

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to address the Public Safety and Health Committee regarding Proposed Ordinance Number 171760.

My name is Shelley Gregory. I am the Transgender Resource Coordinator at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. The Center was founded in 1998 with the mission of further developing the vibrant LGBTQ community in the greater Milwaukee area, thus improving the quality of life for all of us. As such, the Center is dedicated to serving the needs of LGBTQ people and to making the Greater Milwaukee area safer and more inclusive.

The Center strongly supports the proposed ordinance to prohibit conversion or reparative therapy in Milwaukee. Simply put, there is no place in our City for so-called therapeutic practices that seek to change features of an individual's core identity, be it sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

Our federal government issued the unqualified statement in 2015 that same-gender sexual identity, behavior, and attraction or transgender identities and diverse gender expressions do not constitute a mental disorder. (Statement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA 2015).)

Conversion therapy practices, however, are grounded in the FALSE and NON-EVIDENCED-BASED premise that identifying as LGBTQ does constitute a mental health condition – a premise that has been rejected by all major medical and mental health organizations, ~~in the country, including:~~

~~American Medical Association
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Psychological Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Counseling Association,
among others~~

According to SAMHSA, conversion therapy refers to efforts to change an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression through behavioral health or medical interventions. But, there is no existing research

or behavioral health interventions can in fact alter
er identity.

hological Association studied conversion therapy in
: evidence that conversion therapy practices work,
scientifically valid research indicate that it is unlikely
e to reduce same-sex sexual attractions.” The American
published a similar findings. The American Academy
that therapy intended to change sexual orientation is
an provoke guilt and anxiety while having little or no
nges in orientation.”

: are aimed at changing sexual orientation, gender
sion can be harmful to the individual they target.
serious health risks for LGBTQ minors who are forced to
actices, and can lead to serious negative health
~~ased self-esteem, increased depression, substance~~
~~of suicidality.~~

r City join the 10 states and over 30 municipalities that
ersion therapy both to protect the well-being of our
youth and to ensure their parents and guardians are
ulous practitioners.

inity to testify today. The Center values its relationship
e and looks forward to continuing its strong partnership
to ensure that LGBTQ people and communities are
rotected from harm in our City.