



March 26, 2018

The Honorable Ed Chau
Chair, Assembly Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee
Legislative Office Building, 1020 N Street, Room 156A
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: ?AB 2943 (Low) Unlawful business practices: sexual orientation change efforts
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Chair Chau,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA), representing over 5,000 California pediatricians, supports AB 2943 (Low), to include in the Consumer Legal Remedies Act prohibitions on mental health providers performing sexual orientation change efforts (“reparative/conversion therapy”) with a patient under 18 years of age, advertising, offering to engage in, or engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual.

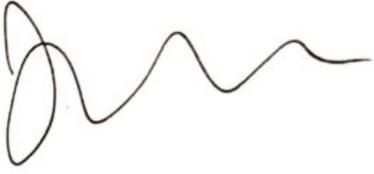
The American Academy of Pediatrics endorses the American Psychological Association publication “Just the Facts About Sexual Orientation and Youth: A Primer for Principals Educators, and School Personnel,” which states that “...counseling and psychotherapy aimed at eliminating or suppressing homosexuality... are based on a view of homosexuality that has been rejected by all the major mental health professions.” Further, the American Academy of Pediatrics advises youth to “...avoid any treatments that claim to be able to change a person’s sexual orientation, or treatment ideas that see homosexuality as a sickness.” Unfortunately, such “treatment” continues to be perpetrated upon young people, despite the attempts of reputable and evidence-based mental health professions to stop it.

The potential risks of reparative/conversion therapy are great, including depression, anxiety and self-destructive behavior, since therapist alignment with societal prejudices against homosexuality may reinforce self-hatred already experienced by the patient. Many patients who have undergone reparative therapy relate that they were inaccurately told that homosexuals are lonely, unhappy individuals who never achieve acceptance or satisfaction. The possibility that the person might achieve happiness and satisfying interpersonal relationships as a gay man or lesbian is not presented, nor are alternative approaches to dealing with the effects of societal stigmatization discussed.

AB 2943 (Low) would prohibit advertising, offering to engage in, or engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual to prevent inaccurate advertisement and the potential for significant harm to youth seeking help from mental health providers.

Pediatrician members of AAP California Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 across the state urge you to vote AYE on AB 2943 (Low). Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and wellbeing of children, youth, and families in California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and wavy lines, positioned to the left of the typed name.

Jayne Congdon, M.D., M.S.

Resident Representative Member, AAP-CA State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: Assembly Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee Members
Office of Honorable Evan Low, California State Assembly (Author)
AAP-CA Leadership; Lobbyist Lydia Bourne