

OPPOSITION TO AN AMENDED ORDINANCE to create Sec. 32-191 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of La Crosse prohibiting Conversion Therapy

Dear Council Members:

I write to voice my opposition to an amended ordinance to establish a prohibition against conversion therapy. I make this recommendation in light of the considerable debate that exists in the medical and scientific community with respect to best practices for the care of persons with gender dysphoria. The amended ordinance could serve to narrowly limit ethical, non-coercive psychotherapies which are not deemed to be strictly affirmative psychotherapies. Many individuals with gender dysphoria have one or more mental health disorder diagnoses including high rates of depression and anxiety. It is of paramount importance that all approved, sound therapeutic approaches be available to them after completing a thorough evaluation. In this vulnerable population, affirmative psychotherapy must be used with caution.

I would respectfully suggest that the Council consider more recent studies and reports which directly address challenges being faced in the short- and long-term care of persons with gender dysphoria. These include:

D'Angelo R. et al. One Size Does Not Fit All: In Support of Psychotherapy for Gender Dysphoria. *Archives of Sexual Behavior* (2021) 50:7-16.

Carmichael P. et al. Short-Term Outcomes of Pubertal Suppression in a Selected Cohort of 12 to 15 Year Old Young People with Gender Dysphoria in the UK. *Public Library of Science (PloS) ONE* (2021) 16(2): e0243894

Bränström R. et al. Reduction in Mental Health Treatment Utilization Among Transgender Individuals After Gender-Affirming Surgeries: A Total Population Study. *American Journal of Psychiatry* (2020) 177: 727-34.

Steensma T.D. et al. Factors Associated With Desistence and Persistence of Childhood Gender Dysphoria: A Quantitative Follow-Up Study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* (2013) 52(6): 582-9.

Dhejne C. et al. Long-Term Follow-up of Transsexual Persons Undergoing Sex Reassignment Surgery: Cohort Study in Sweden. *Public Library of Science (PloS) ONE* (2011) 6(2): e16885

I recommend that the Common Council of the City of La Crosse reconsider this amended ordinance.

Thank you for this opportunity to expression my opinion.

Respectfully submitted,

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