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To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: conversion therapy

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Dear council members,

Thank you for giving the individuals of our community the opportunity to speak about the conversion therapy ban. It was wonderful to hear civic discourse; my heart begs for the process of democracy to lead the council one step further before a vote—perhaps a compromise to put before the full council.

When I reflected on the various statements made from all parties, I heard consistent themes. Most importantly-I think people from both sides are advocating for their position because they care for children. From the people who want to pass the ban-I heard a plea to end conversion therapy that is punitive. From the people who opposed the ban—I heard a desire to preserve freedom of speech for those who want to have conversations with their patients that are restorative, or conversations that allow for discussion about biology.

Can't the city accomplish both agendas? Wouldn't it be possible to both ban punitive conversion therapy, but also allow for "restorative conversations" between health professionals and children with gender dysphoria? I think some could interpret the ban on conversion therapy which "bans any therapy intended to change a child's gender identity" to be *so broad*, that all health care professionals simply adapt a mute tongue, in which we never feel like we can question a child, or gently share insights about biology with these children, because it may be interpreted as "conversion therapy."

This may, of course, require yet another revision. However, I believe it is time well spent if you can achieve a compromise that satisfies the pleas of "both sides" and aims to further the health of the children in our community.

Thank you for your listening ear and service to our community.

Respectfully,

Andrea Van Wyk, MD
Pediatrician