



August 12, 2020

The Honorable John Schickel  
Co-Chair, Interim Joint Committee on Licensing, Occupations, and Administrative Regulations  
702 Capital Avenue  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Chairman Schickel:

On behalf of the Kentucky Medical Association (KMA) and its physician and medical student members, I write to state our strong support for the Youth Mental Health Protection Act, with its goal of protecting youth under the age of 18 from ineffective and dangerous sexual orientation change efforts known as “conversion” or “reparative” therapy.

Numerous research meta-analyses have found that the conversion therapy practice increases anxiety, depressive behavior, self-harm, and suicidality. In recent years, sixteen countries including Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom have imposed partial or complete bans on the practice of conversion therapy. Numerous scientific and professional organizations, including the American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, American Academy of Physician Assistants, and the American Medical Student Association have voiced their strong opposition to this dangerous practice. In fact, according to the American Psychiatric Association’s *Position Statement on Issues Related to Homosexuality* (2013), conversion efforts pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

The Kentucky Medical Association believes this is a critical issue that warrants specific legislative intervention to stop this harmful practice. Therefore, the Association joins other professional groups to support the Youth Mental Health Protection Act and urges your support of this legislation, which will help ensure the overall health and safety of all of Kentucky’s youth.

KMA would like to thank you and the entire Licensing, Occupations, and Administrative Regulations Committee for your consideration of this critically important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick T. Padgett', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Patrick T. Padgett  
Executive Vice President  
Kentucky Medical Association