
Breaking Down HB 587

What is HB 587?

HB 587 seeks to prohibit licensed mental health professionals from offering talk therapy to youth who are experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria.

Prohibits talk therapy, not physically abusive practices

This bill is not about behavioral “conversion” via physical coercion or abusive practices such as electroshock. The bill is about talk therapy.

Physical abuse is already illegal, as it should be. Such techniques would subject practitioners to criminal charges as well as professional sanctions.

Supporters of HB 587 who have expressed concerns about the use of “aversion therapy” have not brought forth the names of any therapists currently using abusive techniques. Rather, scare tactics involving archaic practices are being used in an attempt to ban talk therapy.

Unnecessarily interferes in clinical relationships

We support policies that promote open therapy that is guided by a client’s self-determined goal, whether that goal is to embrace or eliminate same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria.

HB 587 disregards the needs and goals of a client seeking therapy for unwanted same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria, interfering with and destroying clinical relationships.

In addition, HB 587 does not mention the parents of minors at all, treating them as irrelevant to their own children’s health.

Introduces contradictory public policies

HB 587 would leave New Hampshire with two bizarre and contradictory public policies.

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services allows Medicaid funds to be used for “gender reassignment” surgery.

On the other hand, HB 587 would ban talk therapy for minors who want to resolve unwanted gender dysphoria.

So if HB 587 becomes law, the state would threaten counselors who offer talk therapy for a minor if it might resolve gender dysphoria yet pay for irreversible surgery on the same minor.