

**Written Testimony in Opposition to HB 1209**  
**Conversion Therapy – Prohibitions and Causes of Action**

I respectfully oppose **HB 1209**.

This bill expands existing prohibitions related to counseling and therapeutic practices by further restricting the ability of licensed professionals to provide guidance that does not align with a specific state-endorsed viewpoint on gender identity. In doing so, it raises serious concerns regarding First Amendment protections, professional autonomy, and the rights of parents to seek counseling options they believe are in the best interests of their children.

Additionally, HB 1209 significantly broadens liability by creating new causes of action and allowing claims for noneconomic damages. This exposes licensed therapists to increased legal risk and may discourage qualified professionals from providing services altogether, ultimately reducing access to mental health care for families and minors.

Public policy should protect both constitutional freedoms and the availability of diverse, ethical, and professional counseling services. For these reasons, I respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB 1209.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

**Brigitta Mullican**

**Rockville, MD 20851, Legislative District 17**