

House Bill 1209
Conversion Therapy - Prohibitions and Causes of Action
March 4, 2026
Favorable

Esteemed Chair Bartlett and Members of the Judiciary Committee, my name is Amy Isler and I am a constituent of Maryland 44A. As a former Baltimore County Public Schools teacher and a parent, **I support HB 1209, Conversion Therapy – Prohibitions and Causes of Action.**

This bill protects minors from harm from dangerous “conversion therapy” by creating concrete consequences for medical professionals who engage in this illegal practice. As Maryland law defines conversion therapy on minors as "unprofessional conduct" by state-licensed therapists, it only makes sense that consequences be defined for those engaging in this dangerous and illegal practice. The Youth Mental Health Protection Act, signed in 2018, covers mental health and child care practitioners and prohibits using state funds for such services, but does not directly address malpractice. HB 1209 fills that gap.

Conversion therapy has been rejected by the American Psychological Association. Their research consistently demonstrates that conversion therapy has painful, lasting consequences, such as suicidality, depression, and substance misuse.

HB 1209 provides the necessary consequences to practitioners who violate the law and endanger young people; therefore, **I strongly urge a favorable report on HB 1209.** Thank you.