



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR  
THERAPEUTIC & COUNSELLING CHOICE

Registered 2017 in the UK as a company (number 10910877)  
70 Wimpole Street  
London  
W1G 8AX  
+44 028 9756 3008

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Dear Member of Parliament,

Our organization represents therapists from Canada and around the world. We are writing to express our concerns about serious harmful consequences of Bill C-6, which would censor therapy that the bill calls “conversion therapy” and we call “change-exploring therapy”. Bill C-6 would criminalize gay-affirmative psychotherapists and discriminate against LGBT couples seeking to reduce or change sexual or gender behaviours that risk their health, marriage, or happiness. The government should not attempt to control people’s sexual or gender behaviours or feelings, but such control is inherent in any law that prohibits help to reduce or change any type of same-sex or gender-incongruent behaviour.

Since Bill C-6 criminalizes any “practice, treatment or service designed to ... reduce non-heterosexual attraction or sexual behaviour,” it will deter provision of effective and potentially life-saving therapy. It is widely recognized that men having non-monogamous sex with men is itself a risk factor for HIV and other STDs. Gay affirmative researchers have documented in peer-reviewed journals that casual same-sex behaviour can be reduced via therapy. Standard non-aversive, non-coercive therapies and trained peer-leader programs effectively help men reduce casual same-sex behaviour [here p. 132](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)).

One improvement would be to add an exception for unlawful or unsafe sexual behaviour, as done by California and other US states. As a matter of justice, this exception would ensure that people who engage in unlawful or unsafe same-sex behaviours or gender expressions have the same right to help for unlawful or unsafe behaviour as cisgender heterosexuals. One of the most common reasons people want help to reduce or change same-sex behaviour or attraction is to protect their opposite-sex marriage and family. Behaviour is unsafe if it puts at risk a marriage to the person one loves and threatens the break-up of one’s family.

Some lawmakers may mistakenly suppose that everyone who is attracted to the same-sex would be happier in a same-sex relationship. The American Psychological Association’s *Handbook of Sexuality and Psychology* notes that most people who experience same-sex attraction also experience opposite-sex attraction: “Individuals with nonexclusive patterns of attraction are indisputably the ‘norm,’ and those with exclusive same-sex attractions are the exception” ([v.1, p. 633](#)). Many same-sex attracted individuals are in opposite-sex relationships ([here](#), [calculated from Table 8 here](#)). Bill C-6 would unjustly forbid them help, when desired, either to reduce sexual temptation and thereby enjoy their relationship more safely and easily, or to reduce or change unwanted gender-incongruent behavior that is damaging their relationship.

Individuals who experience same-sex sexuality or gender-incongruence are not all the same. Population-based research ([here](#), [here](#)) and research by an ideologically diverse team of LGBT-affirming researchers and change-exploring researchers have found that those who follow their faiths that reject same-sex relationships are no less [happy, mentally healthy, satisfied with life, and flourishing](#) than those of faiths that accept same-sex relationships or those of no faith. They are more likely to be in opposite-sex relationships, in which 80%

experience real relationship satisfaction, or to be abstinent. Their view of same-sex sexuality likely represents movement toward religious views, not beliefs about self, self-hatred, or shame ([here](#), [here](#)). In truth, the view that sexual or gender minority individuals could not possibly freely choose help to align their sexuality or gender with their personal fulfillment, physical and mental health needs, religion, or marital and family well-being apart from externalized and internalized oppression is itself oppressive.

The two largest research reviews by [gay-affirming \(p. 49\)](#) and [change-exploring](#) researchers both agree that research participants reported they changed same-sex attraction and behaviour via standard non-aversive therapies. They also [accept](#) that there is no research that meets scientific standards that proves non-aversive, change-exploring therapy is ineffective or unsafe. We interact with change-exploring therapists in Canada and around the world who support the safety and effectiveness of change-exploring therapy conversations.


Banning help to reduce or change same-sex or gender-incongruent behaviour or feelings would not “protect the human dignity and equality of all Canadians”, as Bill C-6 claims. Instead, Bill C-6 violates an individual’s dignity and most profound and fundamental freedoms and rights to self-determination in many domains. In effect, by therapy censorship, Bill C-6 polices thoughts, speech, sexual behaviours, sexual desires, gender expressions, gender identities, LGBT relationships, procreative relationships, families, many religions, many cultures, and who has access to much needed therapy.

Everyone should have the right to walk away from sexual or gender experiences that do not work for them and have help to live the way that brings them health and happiness.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote “No” on Bill C-6.

If you would like to discuss these issues further, please use the contact information below.

Sincerely,



M. R. Davidson, Ph.D., Chairman, International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice ([iftcc.org](http://iftcc.org))

also for:

Laura Haynes, Ph.D., General Board, International Federation for Therapeutic and Counseling Choice ([iftcc.org](http://iftcc.org))  
Contact: [laurahaynesphdresearch@gmail.com](mailto:laurahaynesphdresearch@gmail.com)

Ann Gillies, Ph.D., Country Representative for Canada, International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice ([iftcc.org](http://iftcc.org))  
Contact: [aegillies2@gmail.com](mailto:aegillies2@gmail.com)

Christopher Rosik, Ph.D., Science and Research Committee, International Federation for Therapeutic and Counselling Choice ([iftcc.org](http://iftcc.org))