



We urge you to OPPOSE CA AB 2943 as amended.

Dear Legislator,

While the sponsor of AB2943 claims its intent is narrowly tailored to practices and services, a Trevor Project/NCLR spokesperson and attorney Samantha Ames (author of therapy bans) affirm on youtube the real intent of therapy bans is to go after “every pastor.” Politicians should not be going after every pastor.

[A new study of men in a peer-reviewed journal adds to over a century of research showing people can safely change their sexual attraction and behavior through therapy.](#) Depression and suicidality decreased, and self-esteem increased. Close to half these mostly middle-aged men were married to women and had children. Now they can live as they choose and go on being full time dads. Gay-affirmative therapy is permanently unacceptable to them on religious grounds. AB2943 would have taken away their right to this safe and effective, change allowing therapy.

[Everyone has the right to walk away from sexual practices and experiences that don't work for them and should have support to do so. 20 states have refused bans.](#)

Highlights of Our Concerns:

- People commonly seek change allowing therapy for **personal reasons, not due to social pressure. Examples: (1) Being gay didn't work for them. (2) They feel it was caused for them by childhood sexual abuse (and the American Psychological Association says excellent research supports this claim. See 5 below). (3) It does not align with their values and beliefs that should be respected. (4) It is endangering their marriage and family (see 4 below). All these are common.**
- AB2943, and SB1120 on which it relies, are **now unconstitutional in 3 ways** (see 1, 2, 16 below). **Major religious organizations oppose AB2943** for violating the First Amendment rights of both clients and therapists.
- **The ACLU of Rhode Island opposes therapy bans, because they “pose a danger to First Amendment rights,” and the practices that bans censor are “quite broad,” such as helping individuals resist acting on same-sex attractions to maintain a marriage.** (see 2-9).



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- **Several professional organizations support change-allowing therapy.** When done right, it is effective and uses evidence-based and well-established practices. Political activists in organizations regularly misrepresent what we do and what research says (see 10-11).
- AB2943 will forbid treating underlying causes of gender distress while preserving a healthy body. Some people do not want medical treatments, or such changes are permanently unacceptable to them, because they are against their faith (see 12-13). **The ACLU of Rhode Island warns, hormone treatment for transgender youth is controversial within the medical field,** and it could be banned if sexual orientation change-allowing therapy is banned.
- Under AB2943, people looking for change will get so-called **affirmative or neutral therapy—exactly what they do not want or which is against their faith,** or they will get no therapy at all. This bill boxes them into hopelessness (see 14-15).
- **A view that brings true happiness for some may not work for you or your family member, but should they have their freedoms and property taken from them?** NCLR researcher Dr. Caitlyn Ryan says evangelical families can support their LGBT youth. It is unconstitutional to coerce viewpoint discrimination through law rather than to use the process of persuasion (see 16-17).

For expanded points 1-17 with endnotes, go to TherapyEquality.org/ab2943.

Sincerely,

Laura Haynes, Ph.D.

Representing the National Task Force for Therapy Equality, laurahaynesphd3@gmail.com
This letter/fact sheet, originally written for CA legislators, was last updated 10/3/2018 for other parties interested in the harms of banning SOGI change allowing therapy.