

1 [Urging the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to support the ban on ineffective and harmful  
2 conversion therapy for persons under 18 (SB 1172)]

3 **Resolution urging the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual,**  
4 **transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQQ) youth by supporting a California ban on efforts**  
5 **to change youth’s sexual orientation.**

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7 WHEREAS, Being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQQ) is not  
8 a disease, a disorder, illness, deficiency, or shortcoming; and

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10 WHEREAS, The major professional associations of mental health practitioners and  
11 researchers in the United States have recognized these facts for nearly 40 years;<sup>1</sup> and

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13 WHEREAS, There are a small fraction of mental health professionals that practice conversion  
14 therapy, also known as reparative therapy, which is an effort to change one’s sexual orientation and/or  
15 gender identity from LGBTQQ into a straight and gender conforming person; and

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17 WHEREAS, Conversion therapy is not a form of psychiatry or psychology because its origins  
18 are from religious ideology, not science; and

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20 WHEREAS, Telling LGBTQQ youth at such a vulnerable age that who they are is not  
21 acceptable further shames and dehumanizes them when they already receive that message every day  
22 through the bullies at school and on the streets; and

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<sup>1</sup> American Psychological Association, *Report on the American Psychological Association Task Force on  
Appropriate Responses to Sexual Orientation*, 2009. <http://sd28.senate.ca.gov/news/2012-04-23-senate-panel-cracks-down-deceptive-sexual-orientation-conversion-therapies>.

1           WHEREAS, Conversion therapy by definition is an attempt to forcefully change people's  
2 naturally occurring sexual orientation and gender identity and replace it with a straight orientation; and

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4           WHEREAS, In the past 40 years "reparative therapists" have not produced any rigorous  
5 scientific research to substantiate their claims of cure; and

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7           WHEREAS, "Not only is homosexuality 'not a choice,' as most efforts to try and change a  
8 person's sexual orientation fail, but some attempts to change can cause harm and damage to an  
9 individual's well-being," as Dr. Jack Drescher, MD, a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric  
10 Association and a member of the DSM-5 Workgroup on Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders, has  
11 said;<sup>2</sup> and

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13           WHEREAS, Conversion therapy is routinely forced on young people without their consent; and

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15           WHEREAS, Practitioners of conversion therapy can use various methods including prayer,  
16 exorcism, counseling, aversion therapy (i.e.-shocking people while showing gay images), lobotomies,  
17 torture, and rape; and

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19           WHEREAS, One gay youth in Iowa was beaten repeatedly by his father, a pastor, after coming  
20 out at age 12. He was told by a counselor "he had AIDS, that he was the only gay person in the  
21 country and the government would kill him if they found out. His hands [were] burned and frozen with  
22 ice while he was shown images of men hugging" and was electrocuted for a month while shown  
23 explicit pictures of men. [He] has since been excommunicated by his family and warned by his father

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<sup>2</sup> "The Lies and Dangers of Reparative Therapy," *Human Rights Commission*,  
<http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/the-lies-and-dangers-of-reparative-therapy>.

1 that he will shoot him if he ever comes home;”<sup>3</sup> and

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3 WHEREAS, The American Psychological Association convened a Task Force on Appropriate  
4 Therapeutic Responses to Sexual Orientation, which concluded, “Sexual orientation change efforts  
5 can pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay, bisexual [transgender, queer, and questioning] people  
6 including confusion, depression, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness, shame, social withdrawal,  
7 suicidality, substance abuse, stress, disappointment, self-blame, decreased self esteem and  
8 authenticity to others, increased self-hatred, hostility and blame toward parents, feelings of anger and  
9 betrayal, loss of friends and potential romantic partners, problems in sexual and emotional intimacy,  
10 sexual dysfunction, high-risk sexual behaviors, a feeling of being dehumanized and untrue to self, a  
11 loss of faith, and a sense of wasted time and resources;”<sup>4</sup> and

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13 WHEREAS, Every major medical and psychiatric association has come out stating that sexual  
14 orientation and gender identity cannot be changed, including the American Academy of Pediatrics,  
15 American Counseling Association, American Federation of Teachers, American Psychological  
16 Association, The Interfaith Alliance, National Association of School Psychologists, National Association  
17 of Social Workers, National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Education  
18 Association;<sup>5</sup> and

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20 WHEREAS, Many of the biggest supporters of conversion therapy have since come out saying  
21 that this therapy is harmful and ineffective; and

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23 <sup>3</sup> Paul Bentley, “Tiny needles were stuck into my fingers and I was electrocuted’: Victim of Baptist gay  
24 conversion therapy describes how he was tortured at 12,” The Daily Mail, October 7, 2011,  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2046324/Victim-gay-conversion-therapy-describes-tortured-aged-12.html#ixzz1xtOasTVd>

25 <sup>4</sup> American Psychological Association, *Report on the American Psychological Association Task Force on Appropriate Responses to Sexual Orientation*.

<sup>5</sup> [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201120120SB1172](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120SB1172).

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2 WHEREAS, The founders and leaders of Exodus International, the largest conversion therapy  
3 organization, have issued a formal apology explaining that efforts to change sexual orientation are  
4 ineffective (all the leaders have since come out as gay), and dangerous, and have been quoted as  
5 saying, “No one was really becoming ‘ex-gay.’ Who were we fooling? By calling ourselves ‘ex-gay’ we  
6 were lying to ourselves and to others. We were hurting people;”<sup>6</sup> and

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8 WHEREAS, The father of modern psychiatry, Robert L. Spitzer, whose work has been used to  
9 support conversion therapy, recently came out as saying he made a grave mistake in supporting this  
10 harmful practice saying “You know, it’s the only regret I have;”<sup>7</sup> and

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12 WHEREAS, California Senate Bill 1172 (Lieu) would protect LGBTQ youth from this  
13 dangerous and ineffective treatment by banning the sexual orientation change efforts on persons  
14 under 18; now, therefore, be it

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16 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission strongly urges the Mayor and Board  
17 of Supervisors to protect LGBTQ youth by supporting SB1172, banning conversion therapy for youth;  
18 and be it

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20 FINALLY RESOLVED, That, in the event that SB1172 does not pass statewide, the San  
21 Francisco Youth Commission encourages the Board of Supervisors to craft a similar ordinance

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24 <sup>6</sup> [http://www.religioustolerance.org/hom\\_expr.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/hom_expr.htm), <http://www.beyondexgay.com/article/buseeapology>.

25 <sup>7</sup> Benedict Carey, “Psychiatry Giant Sorry for Backing Gay ‘Cure’,” *New York Times*, May 18, 2012,  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/health/dr-robert-l-spitzer-noted-psychiatrist-apologizes-for-study-on-gay-cure.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/19/health/dr-robert-l-spitzer-noted-psychiatrist-apologizes-for-study-on-gay-cure.html?_r=1).

1 banning so called conversion therapy in youth, and creating a disclaimer adults must read and sign  
2 before seeking this harmful treatment.

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LEAH LACROIX

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2011-2012 YOUTH COMMISSION CHAIR

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ADOPTED BY YOUTH COMMISSION

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JUNE 18, 2012

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