



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on October 2, 2012

New Calif. Law Bans Counseling of Teens for Same-sex Attraction

California Gov. Jerry Brown has signed controversial legislation making his state the first to ban therapy for minors struggling with same-sex attraction. As of January 1, 2013, explained the [Associated Press](#), “mental health practitioners are prohibited from performing sexual orientation change efforts — known as reparative or conversion therapy — for anyone under 18.” In a statement Brown parroted the talking points of homosexual activists pushing the measure, arguing that such therapies “have no basis in science or medicine and they will now be relegated to the dustbin of quackery.”



Democratic State Senator Ted Lieu, who had championed the legislation, referred to the counseling that has helped many individuals overcome same-sex attraction as “junk science” that has been condemned by the American Psychiatric Association. During debate on the bill, openly homosexual state assemblyman Ricardo Lara argued for its passage, insisting that “one of our number-one priorities in this house is to protect the next generation of Californians. And some of those are sissy boys. And some of those sissy boys grow up to be Assembly members. And some of those sissy boys need help. And we are here to stand with those sissy boys.”

Another openly homosexual legislator, Speaker of the State Assembly John Perez, said during debate on the bill that “it is inappropriate for anyone, including parents, to subject anybody to dehumanizing activity” — referring to the conversion therapy.

The Human Rights Campaign, one of the nation’s premier homosexual activist groups, said in a statement that it was “grateful to Gov. Brown for standing with California’s children. LGBT youth will now be protected from a practice that has not only been debunked as junk science, but has been proven to have drastically negative effects on their well-being.”

Another pro-homosexual group, Equality California, declared in a victory statement that the new law “will ensure that state-licensed therapists can no longer abuse their power to harm LGBT youth and propagate the dangerous and deadly lie that sexual orientation is an illness or disorder that can be ‘cured.’”

But Christopher Rosik, president of the [National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality](#) (NARTH), which had lobbied against the legislation, called its passage “another triumph of political activism over objective science.” The group had argued that it is the right of parents to decide what is best for their children, and more research needs to be done in the discipline of reparative therapy. “In NARTH’s view, a truly scientific response would call for more and better research to answer these questions [about the therapy’s efficacy], not a legislative ban that runs roughshod over professional



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judgment and parental choice,” said Rosik, who is a psychologist.

A NARTH statement added that the law will jeopardize the livelihoods of “licensed therapists in California who would otherwise be willing to assist minor clients in modifying their unwanted same-sex attractions and behaviors.”

>One group opposed to the bill, [Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays](#) (PFOX), sent a letter to Senator Lieu in August saying that as parents of individuals who have struggled with homosexuality, “we are ashamed of your willingness to take action against parents, children, and the family in order to support gay activists. California is not a socialist state and our children do not belong to the government, subject to the ideology of the state over the objections of their parents.”

The [Pacific Justice Institute](#) (PJI), a conservative legal advocacy group, also condemned the measure, calling it a violation of the First Amendment guarantees of those who practice the therapy. “Of all the freedom-killing bills we have seen in our legislature the last several years, this is among the worst,” said PJI president Brad Dacus. “This outrageous bill makes no exceptions for young victims of sexual abuse who are plagued with unwanted same-sex attraction, nor does it respect the consciences of mental health professionals who work in a church.” Dacus said that PJI would file suit against the law “to defend families, children, and religious freedom. This unprecedented bill is outrageously unconstitutional.”

In all the debate over reparative therapy, little was heard from those who have been aided by it. Last May, as the bill was being debated in the California legislature, Jeff Johnston told Focus on the Family’s [CitizenLink.com](#) that some 25 years ago “I was living in California and looking for help with same-sex attractions. My motivation wasn’t self-hatred or pressure from a ‘hetero-normative’ society. I believed what the Bible says and the church teaches: God made sexual expression for marriage between a man and a woman. I knew there were grave health risks to homosexual sex, and I wanted a family.” Johnston emphasized that counseling “was a huge help to me on [my journey out of homosexuality](#); now I’m happily married, with three terrific sons. My marriage and children would not exist without the help and support of Christian [therapists](#).”

As reported in [The New American](#), a study by [People Can Change](#), a group that assists individuals in dealing with unwanted same-sex attraction (SSA), found that over half of the people seeking such help reported that they benefited from counseling. The study, released in late August, found that 55 percent of those who sought counseling for the same-sex attraction experienced a decrease in such feelings after the counseling. “Hundreds of people are telling us their counseling worked, they benefited significantly, it helped them feel better about themselves — and in some cases it even saved their lives,” said Rich Wyler, founder of People Can Change. He noted that while the voices of such individuals have been ignored “by pro-gay activists and mainstream media in favor of a more politically correct view ... the experience of these men and women is real. It is valid.... Their voluntary choice to pursue change deserves respect.”



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