



Dannel P. Malloy

GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

March 7, 2017

Sen. Terry Gerratana
Sen. Heather Somers
Rep. Jonathan Steinberg
Rep. Prasad Srinivasan

Public Health Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3000
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Testimony from Governor Dannel P. Malloy in support of H.B. 6695, An Act Concerning the Protection of Youth from Conversion Therapy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on such a critical issue.

Connecticut has a long and proud history of supporting equality for members of the LGBTQ community. In 2011, I had the privilege of championing legislation extending those rights by codifying gender identity and expression as a protected class under the state's anti-discrimination laws. In 2016, I was proud to propose legislation prohibiting the Connecticut National Guard from discriminating based on gender identity or sexual orientation.

I applaud the Public Health committee for taking up this legislative proposal. As we all know, there is no medical evidence that supports this "therapy" and, in fact, it often has damaging effects on those individuals who undergo it. Prohibiting licensed professionals from providing or encouraging this non-medical service will not only decrease its occurrence, but will also help us move toward a society that reflects the ideals of tolerance and inclusion that so many of us work towards.

The framing of sexual orientation as an illness or condition requiring correction is as destructive as it is uninformed. At a time when we see violence increasing against anyone perceived as "different", a time when we see the rights of our friends and neighbors being threatened by the national government, a time when we see LGBTQ youth turning to suicide at record rates, to remain silent is to be complicit.

As history has shown time and time again, progress happens when individuals choose to stand up for what's right. I am proud today to stand with the General Assembly, as well as countless other individuals, as Connecticut takes yet another step towards a free and equal society for all. I look forward to continuing this dialogue throughout the legislative session and into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dannel P. Malloy".

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor