

House Bill 569

By: Representatives Wilson of the 80th, Drenner of the 85th, Oliver of the 82nd, and Buckner of the 137th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to professions and
2 businesses, so as to prohibit the practice of conversion therapy by professional counselors,
3 physicians, or psychologists; to define "conversion therapy"; to provide for related matters;
4 to provide for a short title; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Youth Mental Health Protection Act."

8 **SECTION 2.**

9 Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to professions and businesses,
10 is amended by adding a new Code section in Chapter 10A, relating to professional
11 counselors, to read as follows:

12 "43-10A-22.1.

13 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'conversion therapy' means any practice or
14 treatment that seeks to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity,
15 including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual

or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same gender. Conversion therapy shall not include counseling that provides assistance to a person undergoing gender transition, or counseling that provides acceptance, support, and understanding of a person or facilitates a person's coping, social support, and identity exploration and development, including interventions to prevent or address unlawful conduct or unsafe sexual practices, as long as such counseling is applied neutrally as to a person's sexual orientation and gender identity and does not seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

(b) A person who is licensed under this chapter shall not engage in conversion therapy with a person under 18 years of age. Any instance of engaging in conversion therapy shall be considered unprofessional conduct and shall subject the practitioner to discipline by the board."

SECTION 3.

Said title is further amended by adding a new Code section in Chapter 34, relating to physicians, to read as follows:

"43-34-22.1.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'conversion therapy' means any practice or treatment that seeks to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same gender. Conversion therapy shall not include counseling that provides assistance to a person undergoing gender transition, or counseling that provides acceptance, support, and understanding of a person or facilitates a person's coping, social support, and identity exploration and development, including interventions to prevent or address unlawful conduct or unsafe sexual practices, as long as such counseling is applied neutrally as to a person's sexual orientation and

gender identity and does not seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

(b) A person who is licensed under this article shall not engage in conversion therapy with a person under 18 years of age. Any instance of engaging in conversion therapy shall be considered unprofessional conduct and shall subject the practitioner to discipline by the board."

SECTION 4.

Said title is further amended by adding a new Code section in Chapter 39, relating to psychologists, to read as follows:

"43-39-6.1.

(a) As used in this Code section, the term 'conversion therapy' means any practice or treatment that seeks to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same gender. Conversion therapy shall not include counseling that provides assistance to a person undergoing gender transition, or counseling that provides acceptance, support, and understanding of a person or facilitates a person's coping, social support, and identity exploration and development, including interventions to prevent or address unlawful conduct or unsafe sexual practices, as long as such counseling is applied neutrally as to a person's sexual orientation and gender identity and does not seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity.

(b) A person who is licensed under this chapter shall not engage in conversion therapy with a person under 18 years of age. Any instance of engaging in conversion therapy shall be considered unprofessional conduct and shall subject the practitioner to discipline by the board."

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SECTION 5.

67 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.