Resolution Supporting Senate Bill (SB) 1172

Resolution supporting California SB 1172, which prohibits mental health providers from engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with patients less than 18 years of age

WHEREAS, Being lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual or heterosexual are healthy expressions of human sexuality, as the major professional associations of mental health practitioners and researchers in the United States have recognized for nearly 40 years; and

WHEREAS, Some California licensed mental health providers make false claims that sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts can make an LGBT youth straight or gender conforming, and youth are often subjected to these practices at the insistence of parents or family, who, however well meaning, do not know or do not believe the practice is harmful; and

WHEREAS, Sexual orientation change efforts also target transgender and gender nonconforming youth, as those who practice it often confuse gender expression and gender identity with sexual orientation;

WHEREAS, Recognizing that sexual orientation change efforts may cause serious and lasting harms, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the American Counseling Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists have issued cautionary position statements on sexual orientation change efforts; and

WHEREAS, Warnings against these practices by medical and psychological professional associations have not been enough to protect vulnerable LGBT youth from unscrupulous mental health providers who claim, falsely, that they can make a person straight through counseling; and
WHEREAS, Sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts, sometimes called “ex-gay therapy,” “conversion therapy,” or “reparative therapy,” pose critical health risks to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth, including depression, shame, decreased self-esteem, social withdrawal, substance abuse, self-harm and suicide; and

WHEREAS, Survivors of such therapy have testified that this discriminatory practice tore apart their family, forced them to run away, and led to homelessness, depression, drug abuse, and attempted suicides; and

WHEREAS, LGBT advocacy organizations including the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), Equality California, Gaylesta, and Lambda Legal have sponsored this bill; and

WHEREAS, The Executive Director of NCLR has stated that this bill will quite literally save lives and that California youth deserve protection from shame and stigmatization disguised as therapy; and

WHEREAS, On June 4, 2012, the San Francisco Youth Commission passed a resolution urging the Board of Supervisors to support of SB1172 and on June 19, 2012 the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of 1172; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Human Rights Commission join the San Francisco Youth Commission and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in support of SB 1772.