

# The Connecticut General Assembly



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## **Abuse Is Not Free Speech: A Statement from the Connecticut General Assembly LGBTQ+ Caucus**

HARTFORD, CT - Yesterday, the United States Supreme Court issued a decision that raises serious concerns about the safety and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth across this country.

The Court struck down a Colorado state law designed to protect all minors from conversion therapy, a discredited practice that has been widely condemned by every major medical and mental health organization, including the American Psychological Association, the World Health Organization, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

These organizations have been unequivocal: conversion therapy is ineffective and harmful. It is associated with increased rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide among LGBTQ+ youth. Conversion therapy is not science. Conversion therapy is science fiction and not based in medical best practice.

This issue is not theoretical, it affects Connecticut's residents, in Connecticut's communities, most often at the most vulnerable moments in their lives. While the Court framed this issue through the lens of free speech, we must be clear: practices that cause proven, scientifically backed demonstrable harm to children should not be legitimized under any legal doctrine.

In Connecticut, we have taken a different approach. We enacted a ban on conversion therapy because we believe that LGBTQ+ youth are not broken and we as LGBTQ+ people are not in need of being fixed. That commitment remains unchanged. We want to reassure every LGBTQ+ adult, youth and parent or family member of LGBTQ+ youth that we're doing everything we can to protect you as members of our beloved community.

This week, as we recognize Transgender Day of Visibility, we reaffirm our support for LGBTQ+ youth who continue to face disproportionate challenges and barriers.

To every young person in Connecticut: you are seen, you are valued, and you are worthy of protection and respect. You are worthy of love and affirmation just as you are. And we will be guided by this belief in our Caucus' work now and into the future.

The Connecticut General Assembly LGBTQ+ Caucus, led by Co-Chairs State Representatives Raghib Allie-Brennan and Dominique Johnson, will continue to advocate for policies that affirm your dignity, safeguard your wellbeing, and ensure that no member of our LGBTQ+ community is subjected to practices that put their health or lives at risk.

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